New Records by: Billy Bragg, John Mellencamp, Dire Straits, Prince

SPIN

Special Issue

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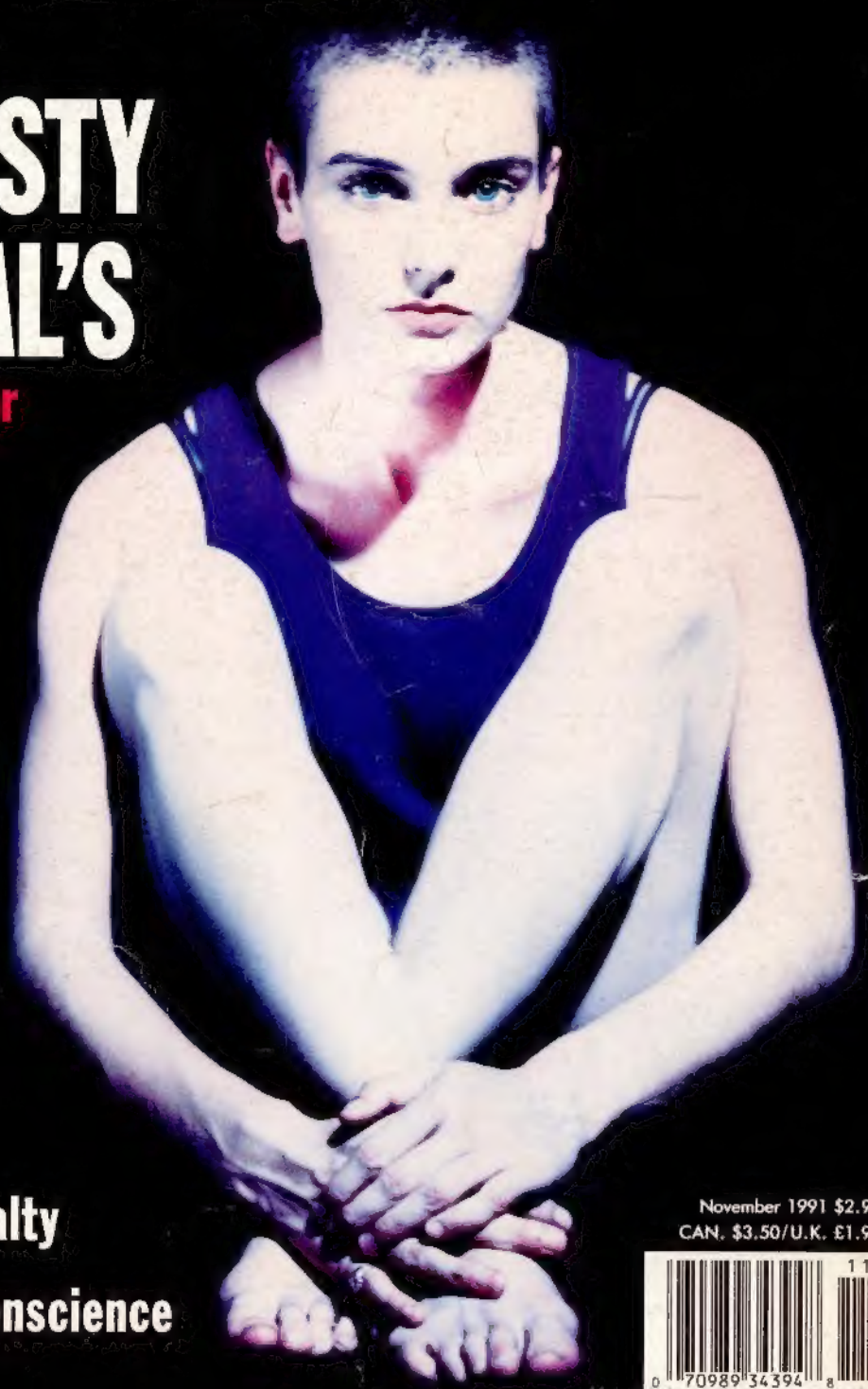
Jack Healey, Executive Director



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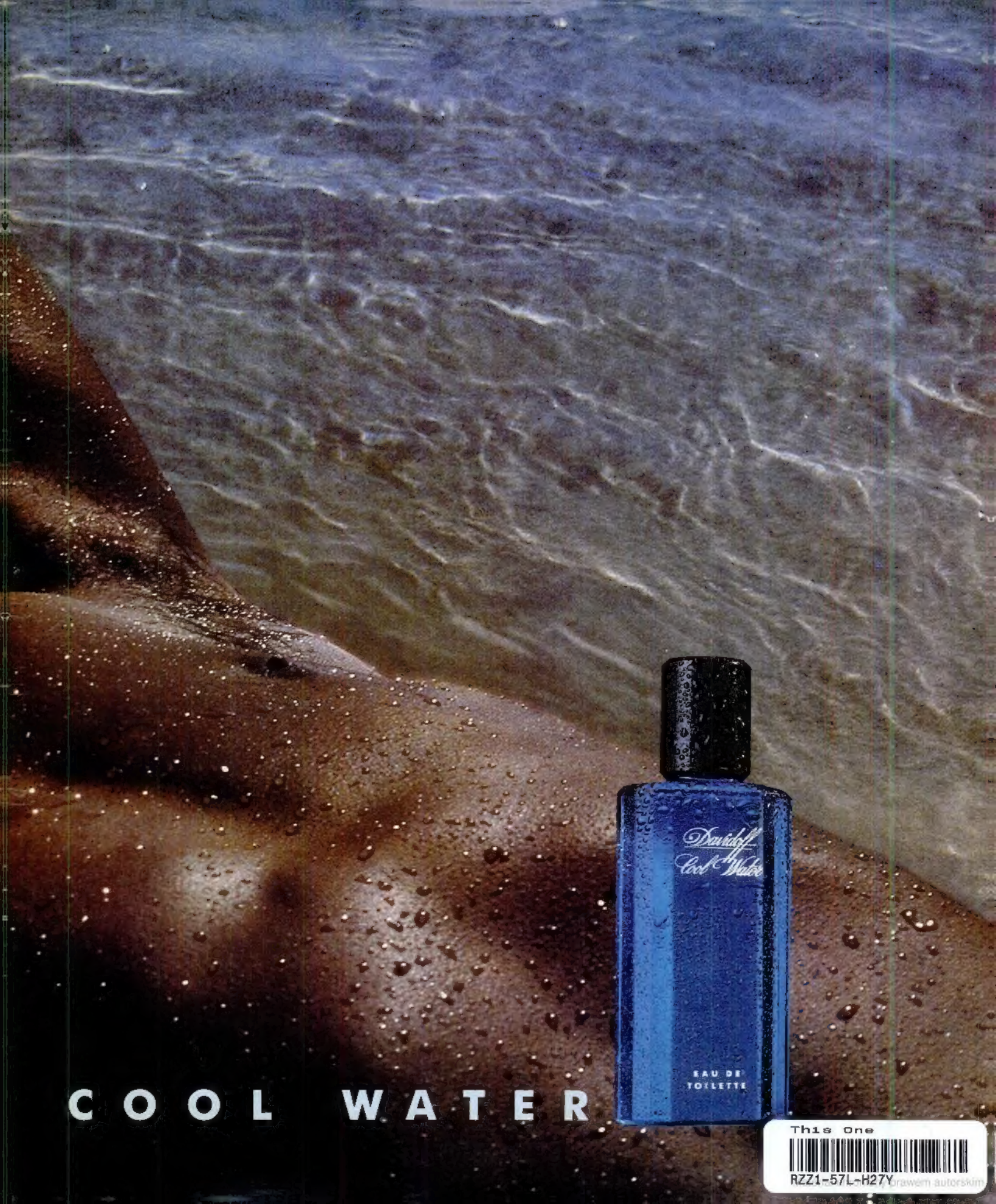

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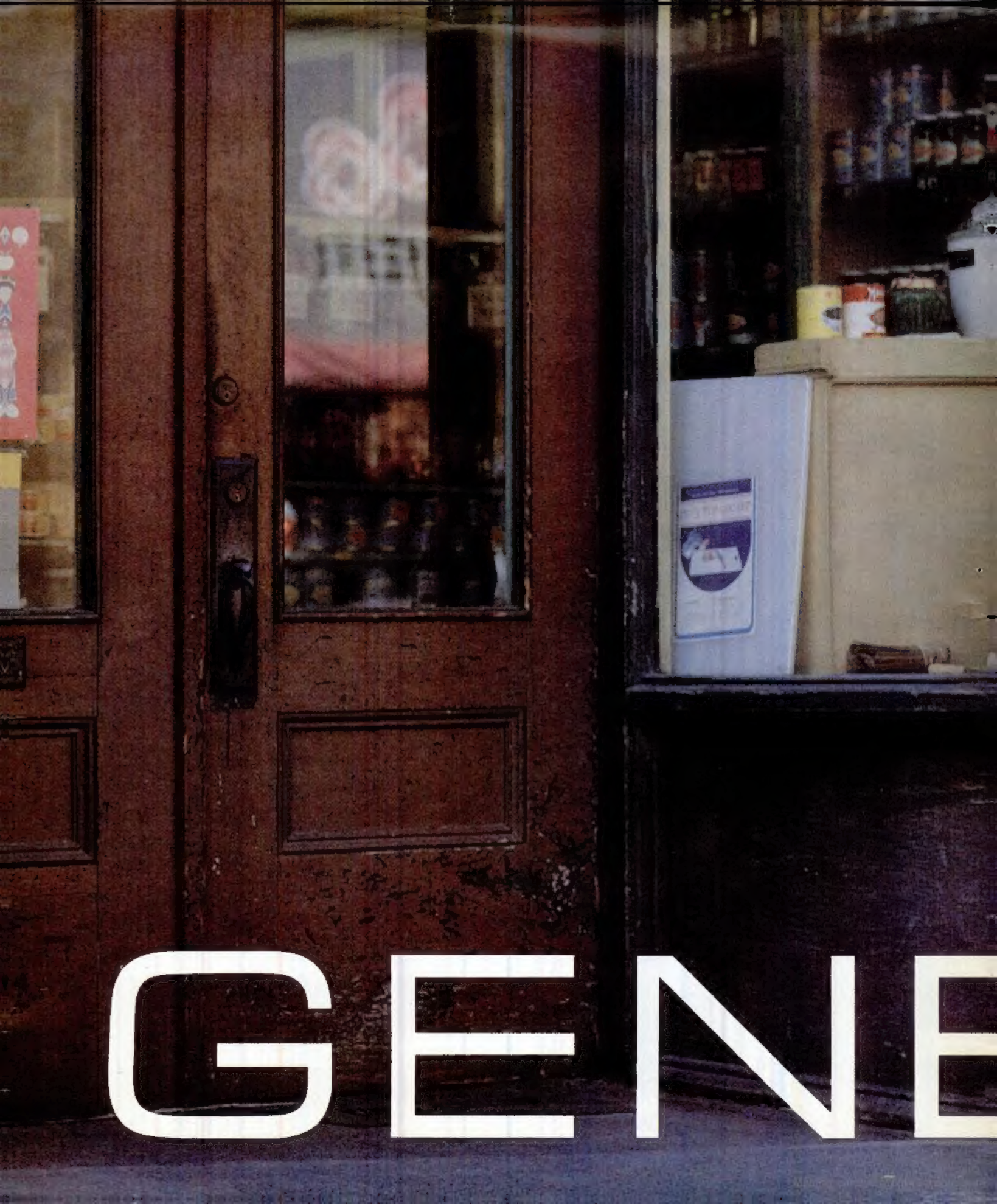
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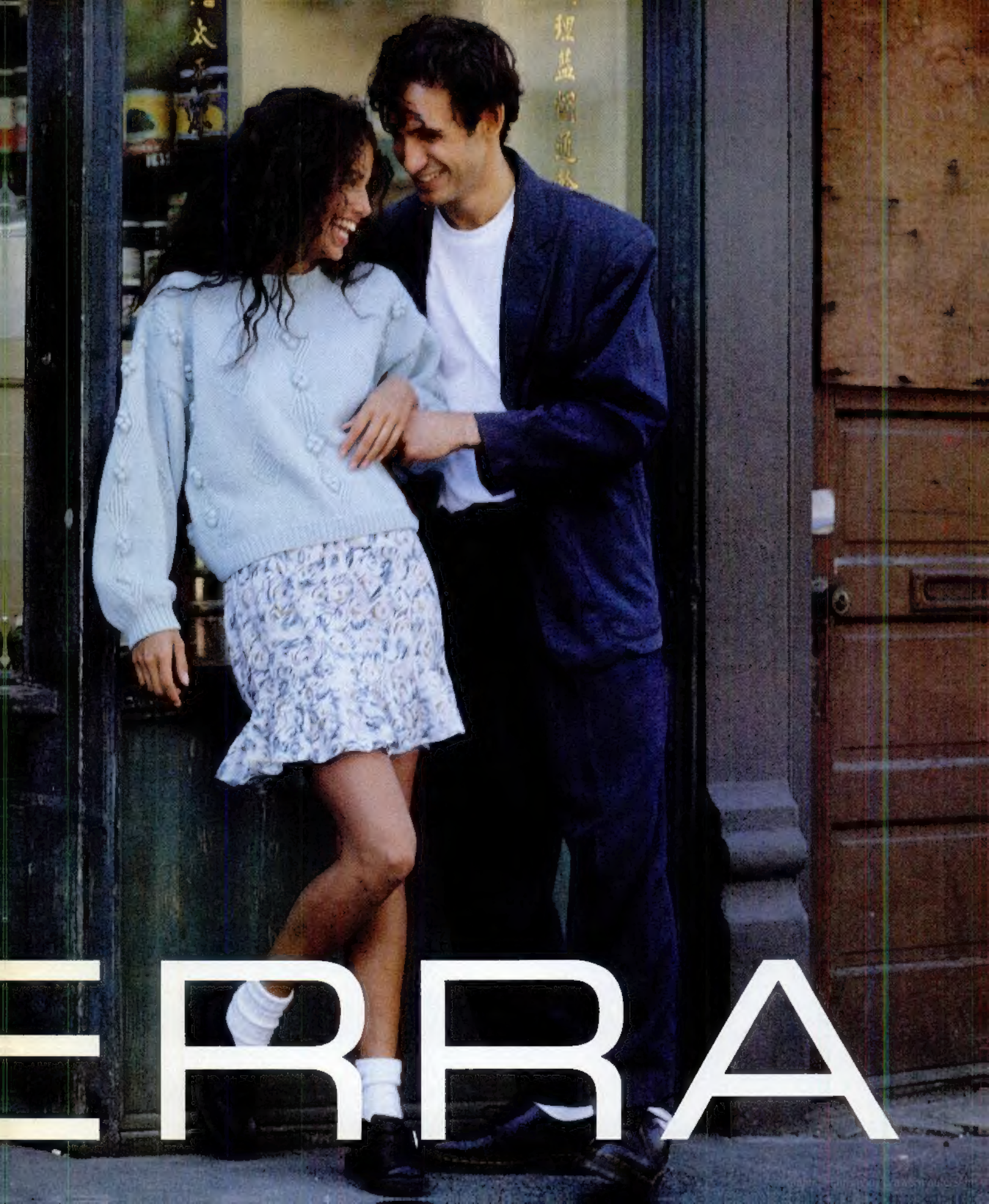
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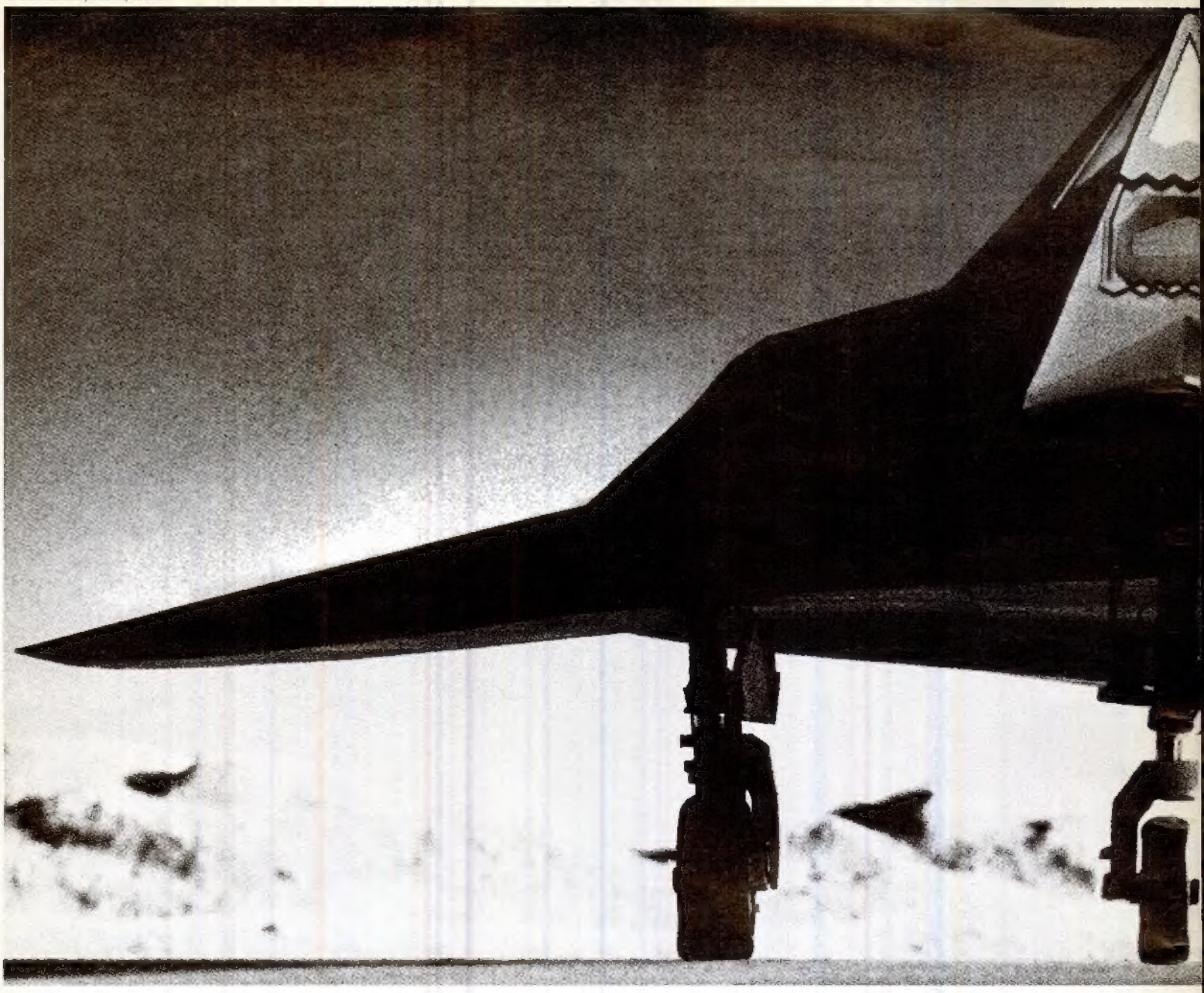

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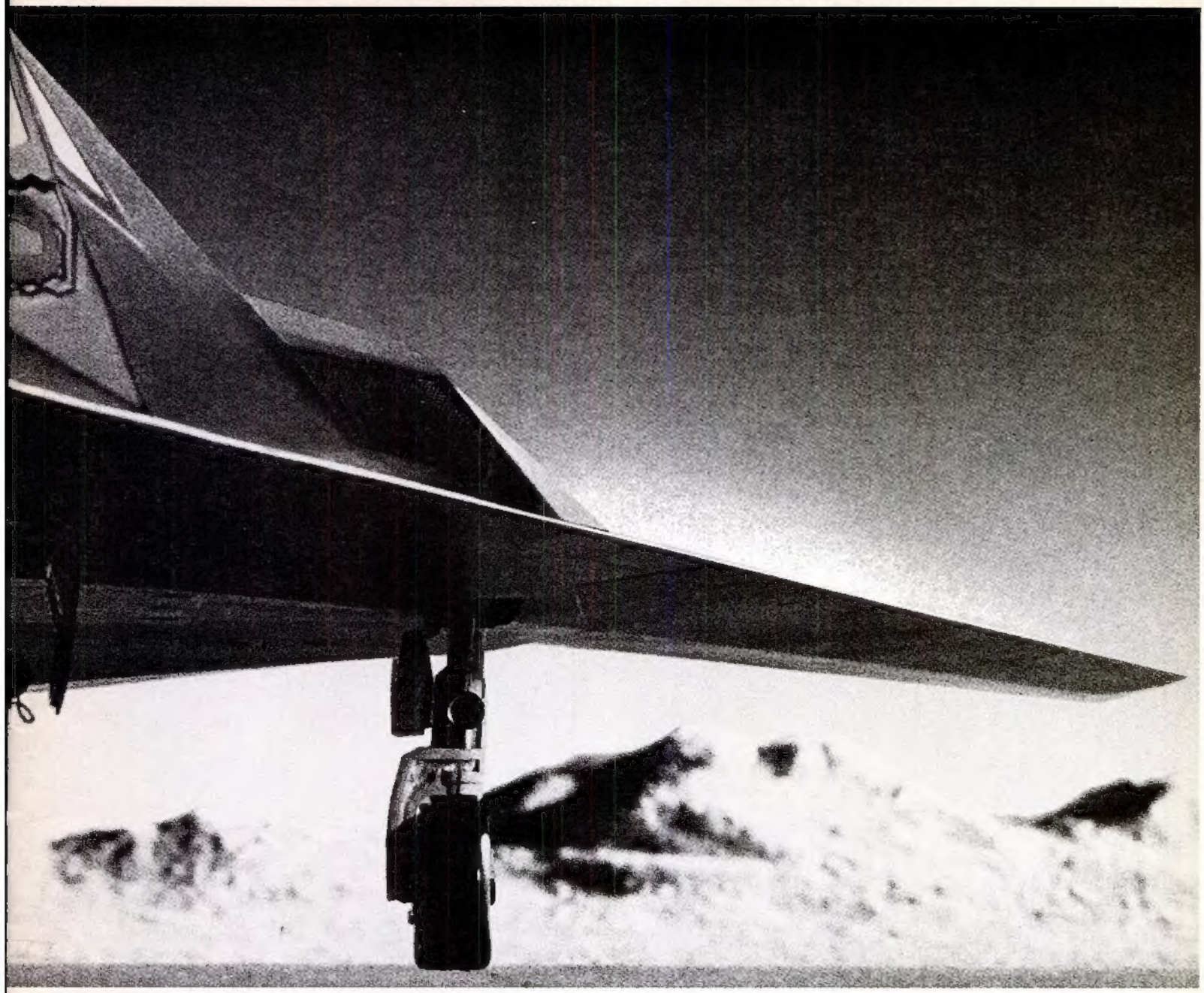

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If music has a gut reason, it's to free the human spirit. Rock'n'roll liberated a generation in America, Europe, and then much of the rest of earth. It's still doing that. Music drives tyrants mad. Why? Because music unchains minds. Those minds work then to free bodies and communities and, finally, nations.

Amnesty International is the rock'n'roll of human-rights movements—courageous, unrelenting, and effective. With pride and awe, we dedicate this issue to Amnesty's purposes and program.

—*The Editors of* SPIN

ABSOLUT MANHATTAN.

IN
RDP 132
RDP D 16
RDP D 15
Special Issue: Guest Editor, Amnesty International, U.S.A.'s Jack Healey
SPIN joins forces with the world's foremost human-rights organization.
Sinéad O'Connor
speaks frankly about her own child abuse, the Catholic church, music, MTV, and the anthem controversy in an uncompromising interview with Bob Guccione, Jr. Page 42.
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Cover photograph by Anton Corbijn

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TALE SPINNERS

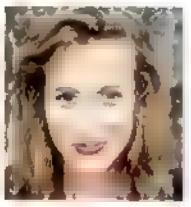
Amnesty International may be the only force on earth that drives tyrants wilder than rock music does. This issue, which the human-rights organization guest-edited, explains how and why. A recent article in *U.S. News and World Report*'s "The Best of America" issue cited **Jack Healey**, Amnesty International U.S.A.'s executive director, as a "nemesis of third world thugs." As Editor in Chief of this special issue, Healey interviewed longtime Amnesty supporters Peter Gabriel (*page 70*) and Wynton Marsalis (*page 80*). "Wynton has always had strong ideas about his involvement in our cause," Healey says, "and Peter's music gets our message out the moment he plays, so it seemed natural that I would interview them about their views on human rights." • Front man **Bob Guccione, Jr.**, caught up with Sinéad O'Connor in London for a fierce Q&A session (*page 42*); photographer **Anton Corbijn** captured Sinéad in his 11th cover for SPIN. • **Jefferson Morley** and **Nathaniel Wice** take a whirlwind trip around the world to determine the price of free expression in "Fear of Music" (*page 53*). • **Bruce Harris**, executive director of Covenant House's Latin America Programs, reports on the virtual genocide of Latin America's street children (*page 78*), artist **Hans Neleman** created the haunting collage of Guatemalan street children. • Musician-activist **Jackson Browne** discusses cultural survival with Cherokee nation chief Wilma Mankiller (*page 89*) "Wilma Mankiller is the first woman to be elected principal chief of the Cherokee nation," says Browne. "Women played a very large part in Cherokee tribal government before contact with white culture, so a certain amount of her political strength comes from a return to traditional values." • In this month's Moving Images column, independent filmmakers **Nina Rosenblum** and **Radha Bharadwaj** describe how they overcame funding problems to keep their message-oriented movies from becoming silent films (*page 97*). • Special thanks to everyone at Amnesty International, especially: Jean Freedberg, Lynn Nottage, Ramon Hodel, Sarah Nail-Lono, Surita Sandosham, Emilie Trautman, Joan Tarshis, and Jack Rendler.

Bruce Harris

Jackson Browne

Radha Bharadwaj

Hans Neleman



Employee of the Month is Research Editor Staci Bonner, SPIN's secret weapon.

"I go roaring into the lot and bang! I get hit with: '75 cents for each 20 minutes.' Unfortunately, I was going to have to eat it. Showing up late for this job interview could blow the whole deal. So I grabbed the ticket and pulled into a space.

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And then I pulled out and backed it in. Great. I was starting to freak. I checked my hair. 'Fine.' My teeth. 'Okay.' My tie. 'Too late now.' As I looked down I suddenly spotted it.

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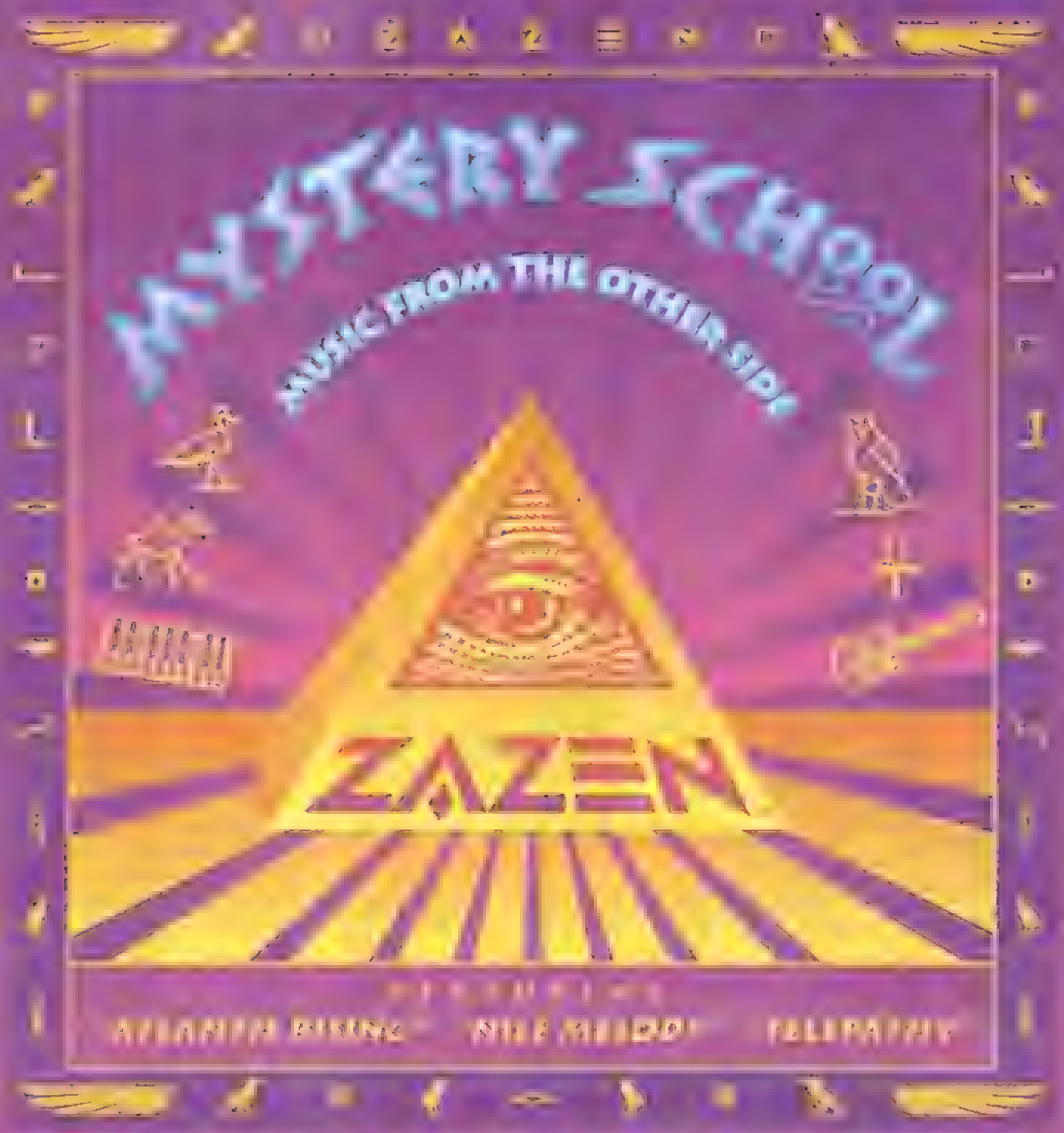

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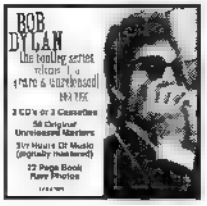

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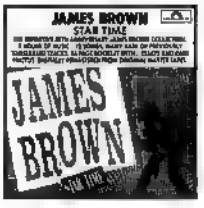

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SPIN51

TOP SPIN

Jack Healey *(above)*, executive director of Amnesty International U.S.A.

I'm in the protest business. The editors of SPIN thought you might want to know what the protest is all about, and I gratefully accepted their invitation on behalf of Amnesty International U.S.A. to help edit this month's issue.

The protest is about torture. It's about government agents strapping down men and women, attaching electrodes to the most sensitive parts of the body, and turning on the current. It's about government troops storming into homes, raping female occupants of any age whatsoever, then bayoneting them and leaving them for dead. It's about government interrogators beating and burning young children as their parents are forced to watch.

Torture happens on a regular basis in over half the world's countries. It's not that a few sadists or psychopaths somehow got government jobs and then got out of control. This is routine, systemic torture. The highest government authorities let it happen. Or actively encourage it.

If you get picked up in parts of Turkey, Mexico, India, Mauritania, and scores of other countries, there's a good chance you'll be tortured. If the government doesn't like your politics, your religion, or the color of your skin, you're a target. If government officials think you know something that they want to know, you're a target. If you're a relative or friend of someone they're looking for, you're a target.

Maybe the government hates your music. Or your poetry. Or the type of work that you do.

A 26-year-old salesman is one of countless torture victims in Burma, where there's a special vocabulary for torture techniques. The "helicopter" treatment means being spun around while hanging from a ceiling fan. "Walking the seashore" means being forced to crawl on broken glass. If you get the "iron road," an iron bar is rolled on your shins until the skin comes off.

The salesman got the "ice treatment." The authorities wanted to know what opposition groups were operating in his district. They stripped him naked and tied him to a block of ice until he gave them the answers they wanted.

The man survived. Maria Pisco Pisango did not survive. Her "crime" was to seek information about her husband. He had been detained by Peruvian authorities, and she wanted to know what they had done to him. Soldiers burst into her home at midnight, tied up her elderly parents, and took her away.

Two days later her body was found, hands tied behind her back, blindfolded, a bullet hole in her forehead. The assailants had raped and tortured her before killing her.

They all go together: unjust arrest, torture, political killing. Add in summary trials and executions ordered by judicial authorities. These practices are indecent by any human standards. They're abhorrent to any civilized person. They're intolerable to any society that values peace and justice.

Why does the barbarism continue? Because too many people think, "I don't want to hear about this disgusting stuff. Besides, it doesn't affect me."

Wrong. It does affect you. It's your world, and persecution keeps leaking into country after country. You let one dictator get away with it, then the authorities next door think they have a quick fix for getting rid of a few people or a few thousand people or maybe a million. How much human anguish does it take before the world community sits up and takes notice?

Amnesty International, for one, notices. We're proud to have 400,000 members in this country, who look at the facts and take the trouble to protest. But what are the other 249,200,000 U.S. citizens doing? Amnesty won't stop recruiting human-rights activists until a lot more people join up.

Musicians, bands, and other people in the entertainment field have been enormously helpful in spreading the word about human rights. They've used their talents to cover all the bases: First, learn what your rights are; second, recognize these rights as vital parts of human existence; third, get outraged when governments violate people's rights; fourth, protest.

Everyone is entitled to freedom of conscience, opinion and expression. Governments never have license to torture people or murder them. It's all spelled out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed without dissent by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. If you want to elevate your day, read it. (Call Amnesty International, and we'll send you a copy.)

Basic rights are not privileges granted by governments for good behavior, or denied because of bad behavior. They're birthrights retained throughout life.

Governments talk a lot these days about defending human rights. But the gaps between their words and the reality are filled with unspeakable suffering and anguished pleas for help. Those gaps have got to go.

We, the free people of the world, have a responsibility to the unfree. In courts throughout the world, people are risking their lives to protest. The very least we can do is show some solidarity.

When you turn up the volume of protest, the levels of human pain go down. Ordinary people can write government authorities, speak publicly, and join demonstrations. A lot of people demanding equal respect for every person's human rights can make a lot of noise. If there's enough noise, the abuses stop.

—Jack Healey

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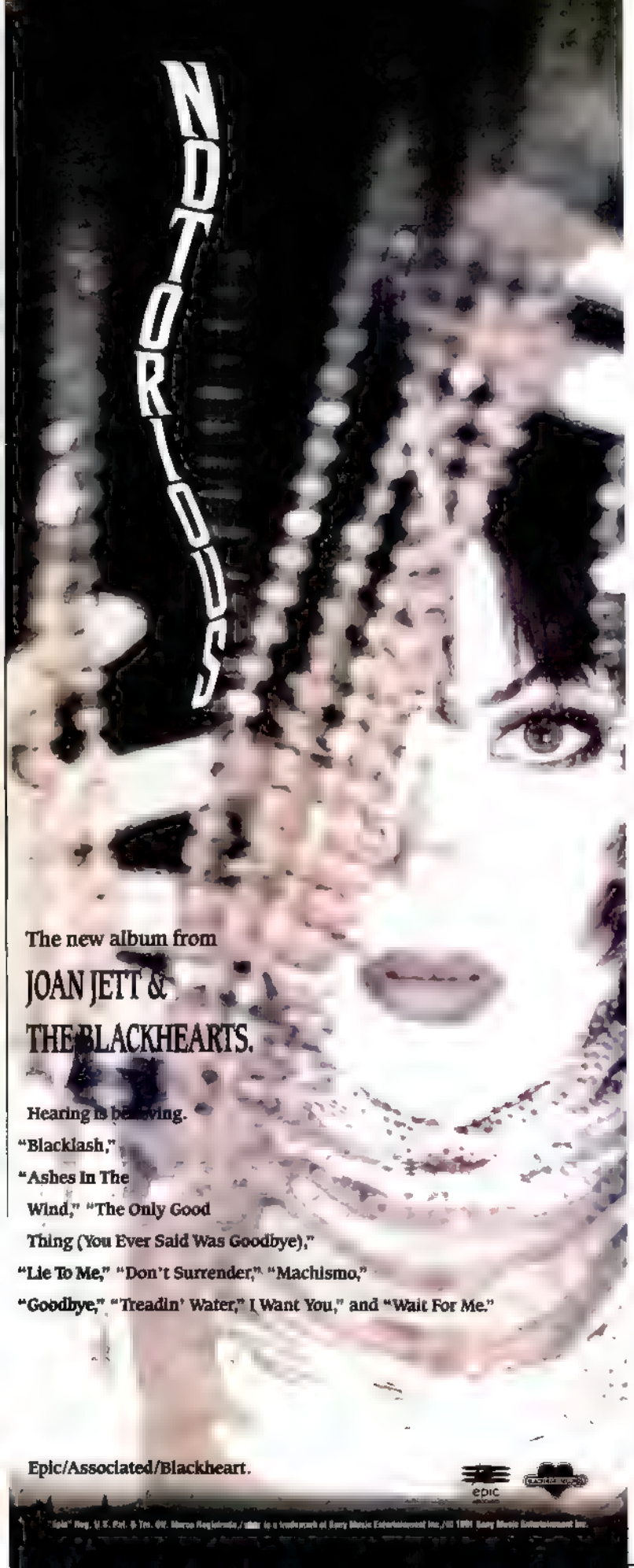
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POINT BLANK LETTERS

EDITED BY
NATHANIEL WICE

Prince Charming

I would like to congratulate you for publishing the terrific article on the divine Prince [September '91], written by the scrumptiously talented Scott Poulson-Bryant. Sparklers and energy were flying all through the article! The approach to the genius of Prince was fresh, sweet, honest, and intelligent. I have compassion for Mr. Poulson-Bryant because of the major difficulty in the process of interviewing Prince. It is quite clear that Prince and his "inner wonder child" find the outside world, in some ways, unsafe. I think we, and our "inner children," all do—to some extent. Prince does not withdraw as severely as Michael Jackson, for example, who has tremendous child abuse issues that have him smothered in pain. So, I didn't wince as I read this article.

It would have been nice to hear from Prince on a personal level, but I believe Mr. Poulson-Bryant's hands were tied when he wasn't allowed to "properly" interview with a tape recorder or notes. Thus, he presented the article with a wonderful historical look at Prince, clear images of the upcoming album, a few personal Prince quotes sprinkled here and there, and some gorgeous pictures of him—just lookin' so fine in his new haircut!

Keep up the great work!
And keep the faith,
Krishna Stone
Brooklyn, New York

Karma Camille

Finally a woman who is not afraid of the feminist establishment [Antihero, September '91]. For years I've felt like a prophet in the wilderness. "I'm not scum, a pig, a rapist, violent, or an oppressor," I would insist to any friend willing to listen. "Those 'femi-Nazis' are the worst sexists alive today." Invariably I was the one branded as the sexist. Boy, I'm telling you it's hard to get laid with a rap like that. Anyway, if I'm a prophet, Camille Paglia is my Jesus.

SPIN's got balls for publishing something so glaringly politically incorrect.
Camilo Gonzalez
Chicago, Illinois

Why is it you and other popular magazines can self-assuredly write condescending articles about whatever dumb-ass bozo (like Axl Rose) draws your ire, but when interviewing an "academic" like Paglia you automatically cave in to everything she says?

Paglia seems to be uninformed to the point of completely talking out her ass on every topic she addressed in the interview. Yes, a diet of only "wymyn's music" is bland fare, but

Camille Paglia, the antifeminist's feminist.

sweeping generalizations about female guitarists are silly—L7 and Two Nice Girls certainly have talented guitarists, and I know quite a few more (myself included). Having played in bands with men and women, I've seen a lot of sides to the entertainment business that Paglia couldn't dream of. Maybe she should learn a little about the patriarchy that really puts the fist down on women in the music industry before she opens her yap about women in rock. Get out there and work in a system where talent is not cherished as important and looks are number one, sister, and you'll start to have a clue. And you'll get fucked over by both women and men before you get that clue. That's because, in many cases, talent is so feared that it is squelched through

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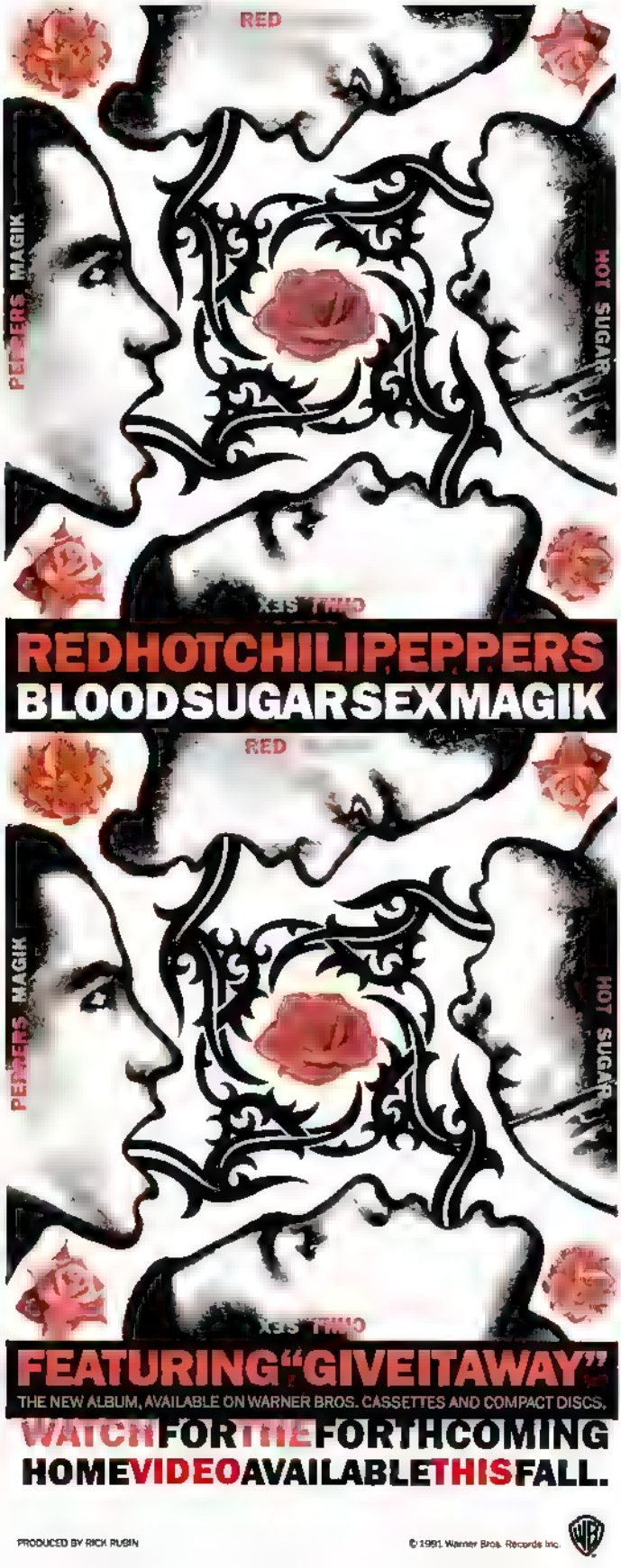


sexual warfare by jealous, amoral women and men. No PC advantage for women in rock.
Lisa McGaughran
Memphis, Tennessee

Abuse Your Illusion

Sorry (but amused) that Dean Kuipers thinks I "completely missed the point" of Axl Rose's diatribe about Indiana ["Guns N' Neuroses," September '91]. But with our country one trillion dollars in debt, thousands of people homeless, and the murder rate skyrocketing, the thought of W. Axl Rose getting cuffed around a few times doesn't seem that significant. In fact, it sounds rather appealing.

I admire his aggression and his music, but let's face it, the man's an ass. To him, I say: Cheer up, Axl. You could be a Kurd.
Marc D. Allan
Pop-music critic
Indianapolis Star
Indianapolis, Indiana

Concerning Guns N' Roses' decision to ban SPIN personnel from their tour guest-lists because of the contract escapade [July '91], I am wondering why this band that composed a song with the lyrics "I used to love her / But I had to kill her" can't take a joke. Take the same advice you guys dished out to the public when that song came out and lighten up. How can such a great, heavy, hard-hitting band be such a bunch of whiners?
T. E Benhardt
Medfield, Massachusetts

An Open Letter to Axl Rose:
Musicians have a right to their music and should not have to see it bootlegged. However, your incident before the Forum is too much. I find it hard to believe that a person who owes so much to his fans would even consider canceling a concert because of a traffic violation. I fail to see the connection between your driver making an improper U-turn and canceling your concert. Have you forgotten that you're not any better than the average guy? I probably have twice the money you do and I have never acted that way.
Tad Baldwin
Ridgefield, Connecticut

Practice, Practice, Practice

Re: Jim Greer's first sentence [Backpage, September '91], "You know, one of the beautiful things about rock'n'roll was always that even a retard like me can play it." I feel the comment was distasteful.

As I sit here writing this letter I have five musicians in my house rehearsing. They practice usually seven to eight hours a day, seven days a week. You state any retard can play. Well, I'd like to see you learn. My band practices and learns all they know from music books and from each other, but also from listening to songs over and over again. Right now they have learned Metallica's "Enter Sandman" in ten days. I personally think musicians are some of the hardest working people I've seen yet.

So Mr. Greer, I feel you owe a lot of musicians out there a real apology on this article
Melanie Wallace
East Waterboro, Maine

Dinner With Attitude

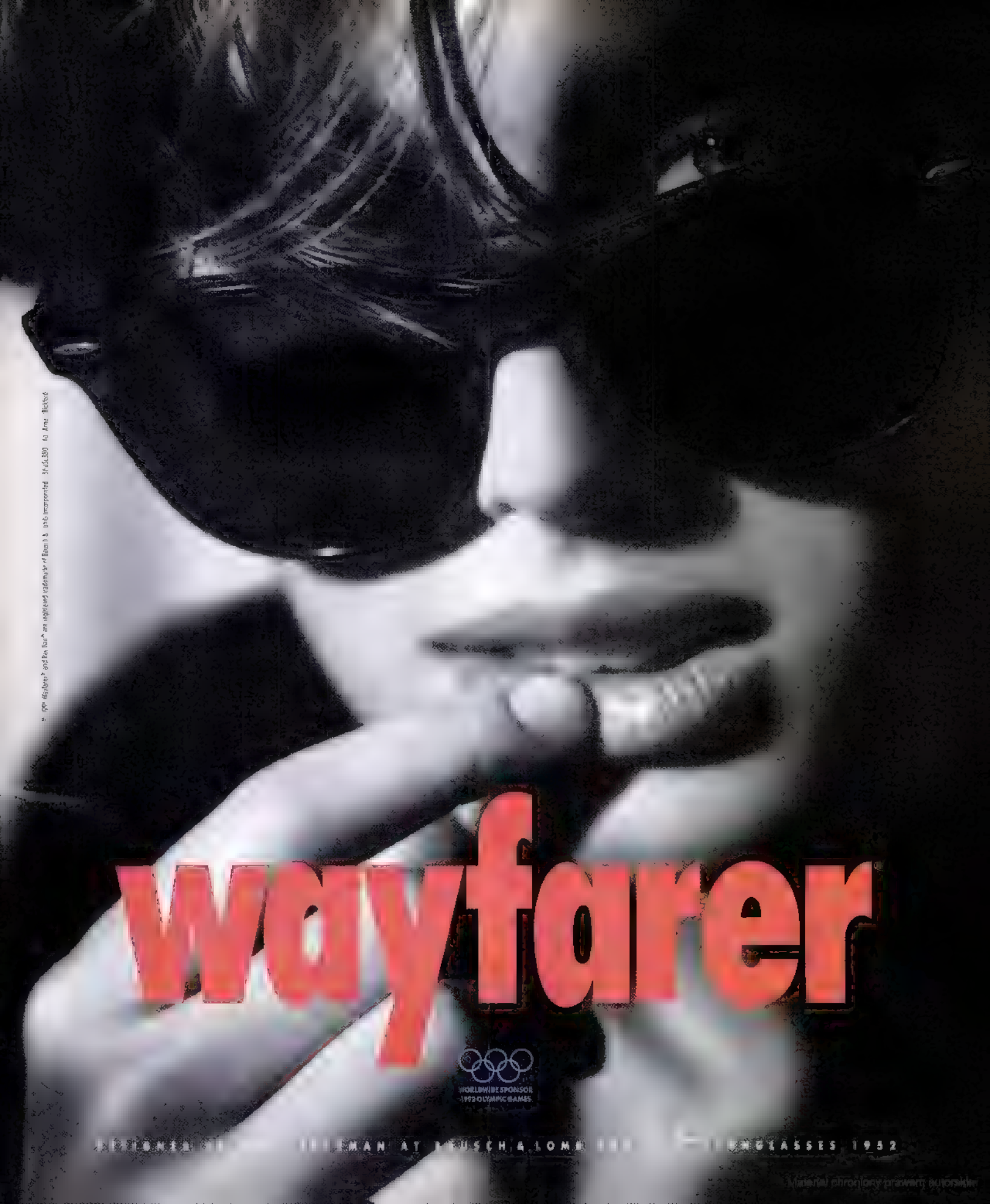
Seems like the real relevance of your piece on N.W.A ["Niggaz4Dinner," September '91] was how the affluent patrons of the Russian Tea Room responded to these particular niggaz. You indicated that you and your guests were the center of attention. Is that all? If the niggaz had really been cookin', they would have turned the place out. But these are tolerant times. Evidently the paying patrons thoroughly enjoyed the minstrel show.
C.C. Cole
Reseda, California

It's no wonder N.W.A needs the strong security guards around them. Otherwise someone might come along and flush them down the toilet. The world has enough violence. N.W.A promotes that, and so has SPIN by printing such trash.
Steven Castle
Seaford, New York

Mistaken Identity

In case you hadn't noticed, the names don't match the faces in our photo of Pearl Jam [Flash, September '91]. The caption should read, *from left*: Stone Gossard, Mike McCready, Jeff Ament, and Eddie Vedder. We regret any pain or suffering the mistake caused.

Address letters to: Point Blank, SPIN, 6 W. 18th St., New York, NY 10011. Include your name and daytime phone number for verification. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.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THEY DANCE ALONE

FROM
"THEY DANCE ALONE (GUECA SOLO)"
(lyrics by Sting)

Why are these
women here
dancing on their
own?
Why is there this
sadness in their
eyes?
Why are the
soldiers here
Their faces fixed
like stone?
I can't see what it
is that they despise
They're dancing
with the missing
They're dancing
with the dead
They dance with
the invisible ones
Their anguish is
unsaid
They're dancing
with their fathers
They're dancing
with their sons
They're dancing
with their
husbands
They dance alone
They dance alone

It's the only form of
protest they're
allowed
I've seen their
silent faces
scream so loud
If they were to
speak these words
They'd go missing,
too
Another woman on
the torture table
What else can they do
One day we'll
dance on their
graves
One day we'll sing
our freedom
One day we'll laugh
in our joy
And we'll dance

One day we'll
dance on their
graves
One day we'll sing
our freedom
One day we'll laugh
in our joy
And we'll dance

Hey Mr. Pinochet
You've sown a
bitter crop
It's foreign money
that supports you
One day the
money's going to
stop
No wages for your
torturers
No budget for your
guns
Can you think of
your own mother
Dancin' with her
invisible son
They're dancing
with the missing
They're dancing
with the dead
They dance with
the invisible ones
Their anguish is
unsaid
They're dancing
with with their
fathers
They're dancing
with their sons
They're dancing
with their
husbands
They dance alone
They dance alone

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For thirty years and more, thousands of people—men, women, and children—have vanished without a trace in Chile, Argentina, Guatemala, El Salvador, and other countries where tyranny remains unchecked by law or decency. Not just dissidents and political activists, but ordinary people, from union leaders and farmers to school teachers and their students. Many are known to have been tortured and murdered.

In Latin America relatives of these lost individuals began lonely and dangerous demonstrations in public squares. Known as the "mothers of the disappeared," they march together in silence carrying placards and pictures of their lost loved ones. Over the years they have endured beatings, humiliation, and murder. Many of them have disappeared themselves. Their courage in Chile so moved Sting that he wrote this song.

INSET PHOTO BY OSCAR BONILLA/PRIMA EXIUM

Halo of Flies *Music for Insect Minds* (Amphetamine Reptile). This boffo comp traces the evolution of Minneapolis's best-ever mod band from its crud-laden beginnings in 1985 to its present shinier incarnation. The Flies are capable of kicking the *In the City*–era Jam right in its Vespas—and anyone who doesn't think that's a wonderful thing is just traveling at the wrong speed. (Greer)

Nirvana *Nevermind* (DGC). The band's first major-label release is about as close to perfection as you can get. This collection of guitar-driven power pop, somewhat sick ditties, and flat-out kick-ass rock will put you in a true state of nirvana from the moment the sound first escapes your speakers. Do not pass go—proceed straight to heaven. (Spencer)

Various Artists *Just Say Anything* (Sire/Warner Bros.). A wonderful label compilation loosely dedicated to freedom of speech. Highlights include Ice-T's metallurgical "Body Count," Dinosaur Jr's "Puke and Cry," Morrissey's Morrissey-fied cover of the Jam's "That's Entertainment," and the Mighty Lemon Drops' version of the Only Ones' "Another Girl, Another Planet." So damn good somebody stole my copy. (Blackwell)

HEAVY ROTATION
STAFF SELECTIONS

Resident Alien *It Takes a Nation of Suckers to Let Us In* (Dew Doo Man/Columbia). More loopy fun and trickier-than-thou production from the heart and mind of Prince Paul. "New York, London, Paris, Munich, everybody talk about . . . the Resident," goes the first track's chorus, letting you know you're in for a funky trip somewhere. Full of reggae licks, Jamaican stand-up comedy and other assorted genre-bending devices. (Poulson-Bryant)

Antietam *Antietam Comes Alive!* (Triple X). Like a dive-bomber on automatic pilot, Antietam hits its targets with enviable ease. Front woman Tara Key sings like Patti Smith with a stuffed nose, but she plays her distortion-strated guitar just like ringing a bell. This one's live from New York's CBGB. If you were there, don't try lording it over the rest of us—this disc's a document. (Foege)

Single Gun Theory *Millions, Like Stars in My Hands, Daggers in My Heart, Wage War* (Nettwerk). With such a lofty title, it's hard to imagine music to match, but this comes close. The Indian sound here is sort of authentic—these Australians lived in India for a year before they made this lush collection, which features Jacqui Hunt's lazy sensual vocals. A feast of charming tributes to blood and despair. (Bonner)

BEYOND SAFE SOAPS

Mixing cosmetics with causes, the Body Shop offers solutions to cleaning up both the body and the world.

The Body Shop isn't just a store where people buy eco-friendly soaps and vegetable-based oils and creams. It's a *movement*. It's a company with a conscience.

The Body Shop's founder is former teacher Anita Roddick, whose 15-year-old shop in Brighton, England, has grown into a chain of nearly 700 stores in 39 countries with annual profits estimated at $34.1 million. Roddick's franchisers do more than talk about issues. They do more than promote recycling (you can bring back your empty containers and get discounts on refills). They do more than sell products not tested on animals. The Body Shop puts its money where its mouth is. It takes action.

The company's campaigns have included the collection of over 1 million signatures on a petition to stop the burning of Brazilian rain forests, the collection of 2.6 million signatures to stop product testing on animals, and the ongoing cleanup of Romanian orphanages, a project organized by Roddick's daughter, Samantha. The Body Shop also imports products from the Amazon rain forest area and third world countries as part of its "trade not aid" policy.

Body Shop products: A mix of hair care and human rights.

Roddick says that human rights is "at the heart of social and environmental change," and so, earlier this year, the Body Shop launched its second campaign with Amnesty International to raise public awareness and increase AI's membership. "We can't pretend that it's none of our business if people are suffering on the other side of the world," she declares.

The campaign transformed portions of the stores into information centers, displaying dramatic posters, buttons, and other materials concerning the human rights movement. Well-trained staff members answered the public's questions and helped them take actions, such as the writing of letters, to get prisoners freed. In one particularly electrifying campaign, Body Shop staffers in Dublin and Belfast erected mock jails in the middle of thoroughfares. They held 24-hour candlelight vigils, during which thousands of letters were written.

Roddick calls upon each of us to initiate change: " 'The job of a citizen,' as author Günter Grass said, 'is to keep his mouth open.' Democracy is no longer a spectator sport. It's time that we as citizens get our voices heard and become gadflies to the government people—who don't have a moral fiber in their bodies."

JOAN TARSHIS

JAIME BIONDO

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flash

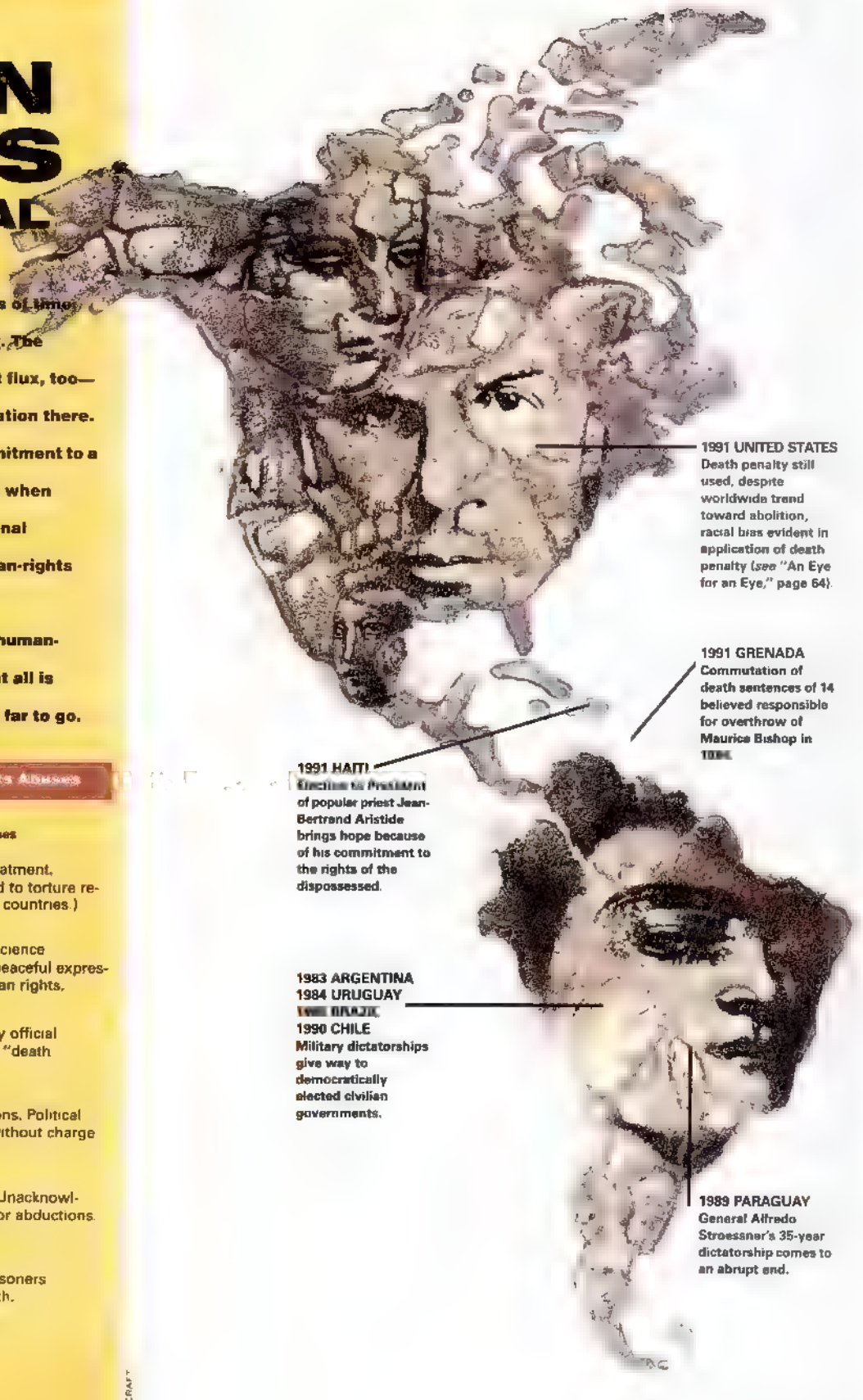
HUMAN RIGHTS
THE GLOBAL VIEW

World events are not frozen moments of time; they are part of the course of history. The human-rights situation is in constant flux, too—an improvement here and a deterioration there. Only when there is a worldwide commitment to a single standard of human rights, and when governments honor all the international standards and treaties, will the human-rights map remain constant.

This map is a selection of notable human-rights events of our era. It shows that all is not well yet, and that there is still so far to go.

Countries Committing Human Rights Abuses

Number of Countries	Human Rights Abuses
100+	Torture and ill treatment. (Deaths attributed to torture reported in over 40 countries.)
80	Prisoners of conscience Arrested for the peaceful expression of their human rights.
29	Political killings by official security forces or "death squads."
55	Unlawful detentions. Political prisoners jailed without charge or trial
25+	Disappearances. Unacknowledged detention or abductions.
60+	Death penalty. Prisoners sentenced to death.



1991 UNITED STATES
Death penalty still used, despite worldwide trend toward abolition, racial bias evident in application of death penalty (*see* "An Eye for an Eye," page 64).

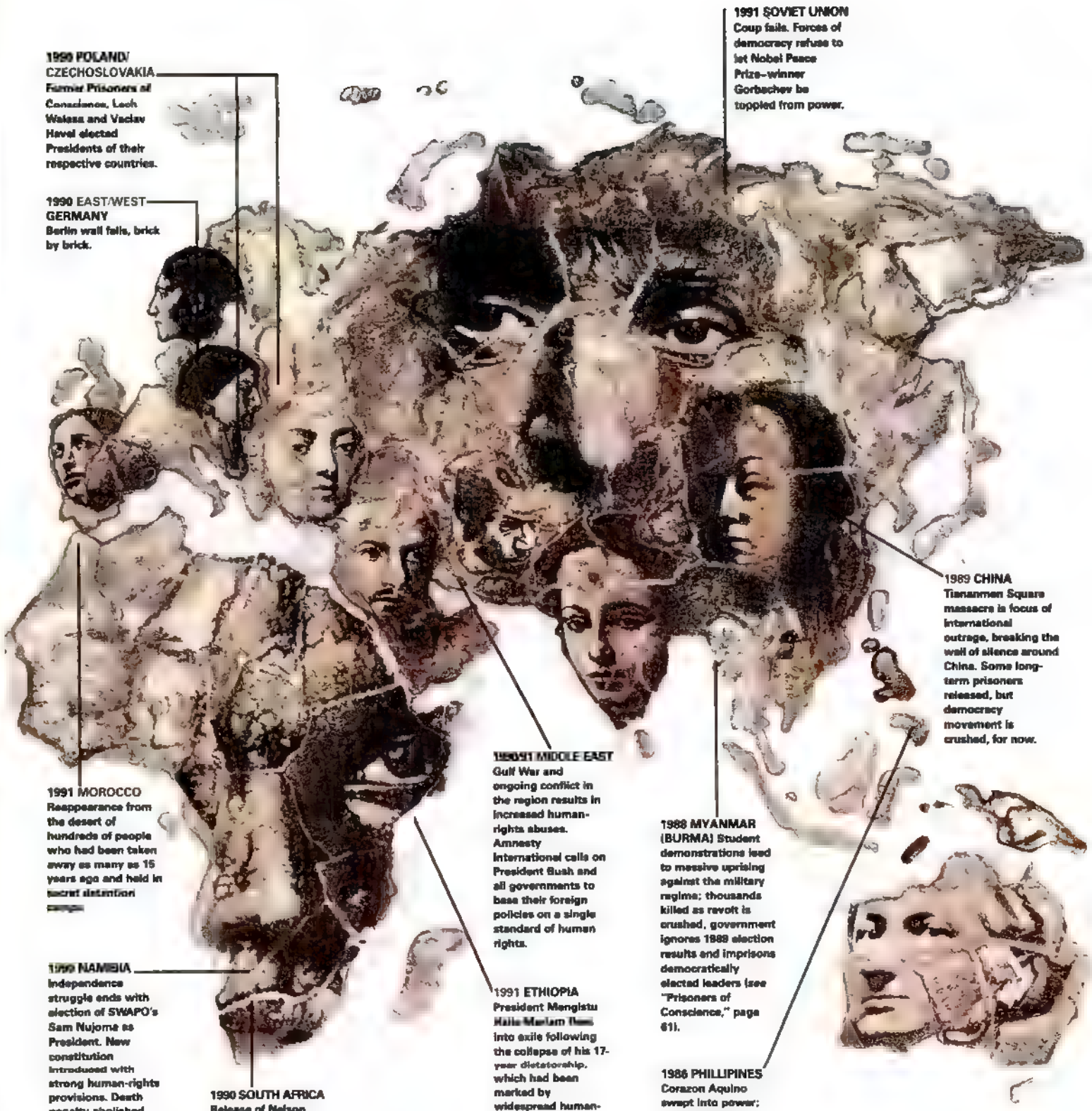
1991 GRENADA
Commutation of death sentences of 14 believed responsible for overthrow of Maurice Bishop in 1983.

1991 HAITI
Election to President of popular priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide brings hope because of his commitment to the rights of the dispossessed.

1983 ARGENTINA
1984 URUGUAY
1985 BRAZIL
1990 CHILE
Military dictatorships give way to democratically elected civilian governments.

1989 PARAGUAY
General Alfredo Stroessner's 35-year dictatorship comes to an abrupt end.

DIANA CRAFT



1990 POLAND/ CZECHOSLOVAKIA
Former Prisoners of Conscience, Lech Walesa and Vaclav Havel elected Presidents of their respective countries.

1990 EAST/WEST GERMANY
Berlin wall falls, brick by brick.

1991 SOVIET UNION
Coup fails. Forces of democracy refuse to let Nobel Peace Prize–winner Gorbachev be toppled from power.

1989 CHINA
Tiananmen Square massacre is focus of international outrage, breaking the wall of silence around China. Some long-term prisoners released, but democracy movement is crushed, for now.

1991 MOROCCO
Reappearance from the desert of hundreds of people who had been taken away as many as 15 years ago and held in secret detention [illegible]

1990 NAMIBIA
Independence struggle ends with election of SWAPO's Sam Nujoma as President. New constitution introduced with strong human-rights provisions. Death penalty abolished.

1990 SOUTH AFRICA
Release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, unbanning of major political organizations begins complex process of negotiations for change.

1990-91 MIDDLE EAST
Gulf War and ongoing conflict in the region results in increased human-rights abuses. Amnesty International calls on President Bush and all governments to base their foreign policies on a single standard of human rights.

1991 ETHIOPIA
President Mengistu Haile Mariam flees into exile following the collapse of his 17-year dictatorship, which had been marked by widespread human-rights abuses.

1988 MYANMAR (BURMA) Student demonstrations lead to massive uprising against the military regime; thousands killed as revolt is crushed, government ignores 1989 election results and imprisons democratically elected leaders (see "Prisoners of Conscience," page 61).

1986 PHILLIPINES
Corazon Aquino swept into power; new constitution drawn up, death penalty abolished; significant human rights instruments signed. But current military excesses in face of continued armed insurgency are an ongoing problem.

Here, where the road bends sharply to the left,

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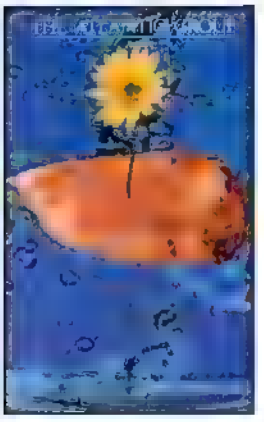

SIDE A

KING MISSILE
"Pickaxe"

M.C. LYTE
"When In Love"

GANDYLAND
"Bitter Moon"

PALE DIVINE
"Something About Me"

JULIAN LENNON
"Get A Life"

FUTURE SOUND
"What's A Brother To Do ?"

DIE WARZAU
"Funkopolis"

THE FAT LADY SINGS
"Arclight"

5:30
"13th Disciple"

24-7 SPYZ
"Stunt Man"

LIEUTENANT STITCHIE
"Night And Day"

PRIMUS
"American Ta"

SIDE B

SIMPLY RED
"Something Got Me Started"

WENDY'S
"Pulling Off My Fingers"

PSYCHEFUNKAPUS
"Evolving"

JIMMY Z (with Dr. Love)
"Funky Flute"

HEATHER MULLEN
"Drinking The Rain Water"

NEIGHBORHOODS
"Pretty Girl"

EVERYTHING BUT THE GIRL
"Old Friends"

FAMILY STAND
"New World Order"

YOMO & MAULKIE
"Glory"

SNAPDRAGONS
"The Turning Of The Centuries"

HARD CORPS
Hard Corps

Tribe After Tribe on the warpath, *from left:* Robby Whitelaw, Robbi Robb, and P.K.

TRIBAL CUSTOMS

Tribe After Tribe is a South-Africa-via-southern-California trio that has never backed away from controversy. For years, Tribe leader Robbi Robb, Johannesburg's max-volume answer to Bob Dylan, openly attacked his homeland's oppressive programs of apartheid and mass censorship, making the rants of many other "politically correct" performers seem petty in comparison. After numerous irreconcilable differences with South African authorities, Robb and bassist Robby Whitelaw relocated in 1986 to the apolitical abyss of Hollywood, after consulting friends such as Amnesty International and Little Steven Van Zandt.

Adapting to the bleak and oft-unconscious L.A. mindset wasn't easy for this fiery outfit. Alienated by the clonish, make-it-at-any-cost mentality that pervades the SoCal rock scene, it took a while for Tribe to get its musical bearings straight. After many fruitless attempts, the band found a compatible drummer in P.K.—a Hollywood local whose résumé included stints with punkers Detox and Rad Waste. At that point the wheels for American success were set in motion.

With little fanfare, Tribe recently released a self-titled 12-track debut album. Hard-edged and esoteric with a pulsating, rhythmic, African feel, Tribe's trademark groove has garnered significant attention—especially in the ever-maturing metal world, as evidenced by the band's recent tour with fellow up-and-comer Mind Funk.

"It's not a soapbox trip," Robb says of his band's modus operandi. "Our aim is not to be confrontational. I'd like to have a more subtle effect, like the wind blowing over years and years, wearing away the rocks."

STEVEN BLUSH

MUSIC FOR AIRPORTS

Above (inset). Runway success Tin Machine, *from left*: David Bowie, Hunt Sales, Tony Sales, and Reeves Gabrels.

We're in the open air beside Los Angeles International Airport. Four enormous Greek statues, well-hung and snow white—the same as on Tin Machine's *Tin Machine II* album cover—stand in line silently, their generous willies dangling downward.

Tin Machine takes the stage, which has a runway as a backdrop, and during the first song—all heavy, jagged rock—a plane lands behind them. The band's lead singer, David Bowie, is clad in a lime-green suit, and Little Richard, a guest at the showcase, sparkles: "He got a good suit. He chop and change. You know, he's *out there*." Tin Machine hammers out a barrage of new cuts. Bowie is singing "Heaven is inside / Heaven is out side. . . . / Heaven . . . " and you're wondering what the people looking out of the windows of the ever-landing jetliners must be thinking *"Shit, there's Tin Machine doing a gig."* Well, *maybe*.

Afterward, Bowie is talking about the censorship in America of the *Tin Machine II* album art, which a lot of industry people claim is just record company hype. "It's a huge bone of contention," David says, no pun, presumably, intended.

The Tin White Duke enthuses about Dublin, where the band rehearsed. "We did a couple of surprise gigs in the Bagot Inn and the Waterfront, doing all kinds of songs." What was the oddest one? "Well, we played that Pixies song, 'Debaser.' "

Little Richard flounces over, and the Queen of Rock'n'Roll and the Prince of Posture embrace and shine at each other. Little Richard is asked how he feels about the censorship of Tin Machine's album cover. "I don't believe in censorship," says Richard, his eyes gleaming. "Ooooo," he goes, his right hand fluttering in the air. "Let God decide. . . . "

B.R. FALLON

TOP: KEVIN WILKES BOTTOM: LESTER COHEN

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DEAR ELVIS,

Are you a big supporter of Amnesty International?
Guy Wilson
Boulder, Colorado

I'll tell you, when I heard all this hullabaloo about Amnesty guest editing SPIN, I didn't know what in tarnation they was talking about. I said to myself, "Damn it. Nobody tells Elvis what to say." But then again I didn't know what the hell *amnesty* meant, so I looked it up and found out it was "the act of an authority by which pardon is granted to a large group of individuals." That sounded all right to me. I know how I'd feel if some dictator fellar in one of them foreign countries ever got ahold of Lisa Marie and peeled her fingernails back with a butter knife or something. *Amnesty* comes from the Greek word *amnestia*, which means "forgetfulness." I sure as hell can identify with that, too. I been looking for the keys to my Cadillac all day and can't for the life of me remember where I laid them.

Sayonara,
Elvis

RADIO GRAFFITI

DEL THE FUNKEE HOMO SAPIEN

Del. Not your average Cali guy.

I use tuh dream that late one night some kinda bomb would drop on Cali N' they'd wake up Afrocentrik! Well, Ice Cube's cousin, Del the Funkee Homo Sapien, is frum Cali, and I jus' checked out hiz new disc. On tha cut "Mistadobalina" Del dropz jewlz sayin' it ain't tha clothes ya wear that'z getz ya over, but nowadayz it'z about buildin' a fountain of knowledge. Now I ask y'all, does this sound like West Coast? No! Del's a member of Cube's Lench Mob but he'z also got hiz own squad called the Hieroglyphics, and they kick tha funk while droppin' some abstract ideas!

On "Sunny Meadows" Del sez "In the region of the forest where tha marsh hair dwells / I sit and write scriptures by the old wishing well / Collect all my notes and sail a boat back to Berkeley / Tribes feel my vibes cause my style is kinda earthly / Some say it's wack but I ain't tryin' tuh hear it / As long as what I do contains my soul n' my spirit." This sure az hell ain't N.W.A! Listen and you'll know it'z frum a kid who'z only 18 but loves some early funk muzik. I don't know how many more times artists can use Parliament stuff and still come off soundin' dope, but I loved Del's blends of George Clinton on "What's a Booty?" Forget P-Funk, this iz D-Funk! Somethin' tellz me that tha dayz of Del haz just begun.

BOAZ MALONE

born freelove

Singer-songwriter Laurie Freelove claims her real name is Laurie Freelove. Thank God. With her taut, aquiline features and compact frame, the 35-year-old Freelove seems too forthright, too in control, to have become the target of some record company's John Cougar–style spin tactic.

Freelove talks and gestures like a painter, which she was and still would be if Nigel Grainge of England's Ensign Records hadn't procured a demo tape of her group 50 Words for Snow en route to the Austin, Texas, airport after a fruitless visit to 1990's South by Southwest music festival.

"There's a link between my understanding about arrangements and space," she says, her voice at a whisper, "and also understanding that music can tell you something specific."

***Smells Like Truth*, Freelove's debut album, sounds like something new—a result, she claims, of her relatively isolated musical upbringing. She was whisked off to Iran as a young teen by a businessman father on assignment, and despite having lived in Austin for the past nine years, Freelove creates a cavernous, mideastern-tinged sound that has little to do with current Texas trends. With the production help of British musician-eccentric Boo Hewerdine, Freelove crafted an ambient atmosphere appealingly at odds with her strong songwriting.**

"My music reflects my interest in the way when you're sitting still and listening, you always hear the hum of something," she says. "You can hear everything being alive."

ALEX POLLARI

Laurie Freelove. Painting by singing numbers.

TOP: MICHAEL LLEWELLYN

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L.A. STORY

Image is really important, whether we like it or not," admits Chris Post, lead vocalist for L.A.'s Dillinger. "So many girls couldn't care less what the band *sounds* like. The record companies acknowledge that as well. But we sort of cross both angles."

Toughened by doing time in various bands playing Hollywood's Sunset Strip, Post, along with guitarist Blake Bachman, bassist Buck Bowhall, and drummer Greg Tobin worked hard on Dillinger in reaction to the image mongers.

"We'd played locally for a while with the material we have now," Post says. "But we finally decided, 'To hell with that—we ain't paying to play anymore.' That's the way it is there: You literally have to starve in order to pay the promoters." So they put their noses to the grindstone, tossing out what they describe as two albums' worth of songs before settling upon the tracks for their debut, *Horses and Hawgs*.

Fans of early Allman Brothers and Lynyrd Skynyrd will be duly impressed. From the melodic "Home for Better Days" to the flag-waving "Red, White and Blue," *Horses* sounds alluringly familiar. "Every time I mention the band to anybody," says Bachman, "it'll be like, 'Oh, I have your first record.' It's crazy. People swear they've heard us before."

ALEC FOEGE

Dillinger's guns, *from left*: Chris Post, Blake Bachman, Greg Tobin, Buck Bowhall.

GARDEN HOSE

If you'd asked me what a madrigal was before now I probably would've guessed it was a kind of weird bird or something. But then again I'm pretty ignorant when it comes to the music scene of 400 years ago. It turns out madrigals are a cappella polyphonic harmonies of lyric poetry, originating in Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries, more recently performed by Katherine Blake, Jocelyn West, and Kelly McKusker—an English trio called Miranda Sex Garden. These days when somebody covers a song by a Robert Johnson it is usually one written during the 1930s, not in 1611 (as was Miranda's "Full Fathom Five").

The members of Miranda got together at England's Purcell School of Music, and were discovered singing on a street by soundtrack composer Barry Adamson. He asked them to contribute some vocals to his soundtrack for the film *Delusion*; one thing led to another, and now the group has released its own lush album, *Madra*.

Recently during our dinner together, Miranda burst into song several times without warning, much to the delight (and confusion) of the other patrons.

"People have mixed reactions when we do that," says Blake. "Usually they're very pleasantly surprised."

I don't mean to seem cynical or sexist, but I wonder if people would pay attention to this stuff if the members of the group weren't so damn attractive. My fellow editor Jim Greer points out that if he and copy editor Alec Foege and I tried to sing madrigals in a restaurant, people would just make fun of us or accuse us of being drunk and make us spend the night in jail. I guess being able to sing madrigals for a living is just another one of the beauties of being beautiful.

MARK BLACKWELL

Miranda Sex Garden appeal, *from left*: Kathryn Blake, Kelly McCusker, Jocelyn West.

buzz bin

Anyone lucky enough to catch the Buzzcocks' 1989 reunion tour got a true taste of punk's past—superior late-'70s power pop cranked out with record perfection and cohesion.

Now critical support has prompted the Buzzcocks to come out of their nine-year retirement once again for a tour, a new U.K. EP, *Alive Tonight*, and a pending U.S. record deal. The band, with ex-Smith Mike Joyce replacing John Maher on drums, was a major attraction at this summer's New Music Seminar, where a packed house of middle-aged professionals, college kids, and teens with spiked mohawks squeezed together for some furious jumping, dancing, and sweating. But while the floors shook during classics such as "What Do I Get" and "Orgasm Addict," the crowd seemed relatively sedate during the band's new stuff.

"That's okay," guitarist Steve Diggle says. "There's no point banging your head on the floor getting to know the new material."

Maybe. Though the new songs in the band's inventory can be electrically exciting live, on vinyl they lack much of the teenage-angst energy that the Buzzcocks were known for in the days when they toured with the Clash and the Sex Pistols.

"Internally our songs have changed," singer Pete Shelley says. "But the idea isn't to compare them with what's gone on in the past. New songs or old, we just try to do what ever we do very, very well."

DANIEL FIDLER

Return of the Living Buzzcocks, *from left*: Steve Garvey, Steve Diggle, Pete Shelley, and Mike Joyce.

TOP MIRANDA TURIN. BOTTOM NANCY LEOPARDI

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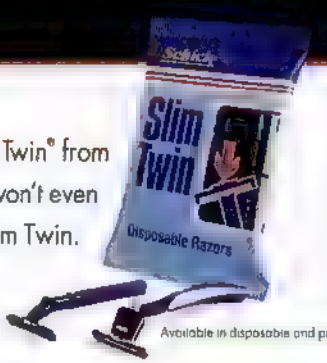

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SPECIAL CHILD

In an incredibly frank interview with BOB GUCCIONE, JR., she exorcises them. Child abuse gave Sinéad O'Connor demons.

DAYS BEFORE THE GRAMMY AWARDS LAST FEBRUARY, IN THE dark heart of the bombing of Baghdad, Sinéad O'Connor dropped a couple of her own bombshells: She was boycotting the Grammys in protest of the Gulf War and quitting the music business. The preposterous notion that anyone would particularly care is exactly what gave these pronouncements their weight. Sinéad's conviction that these were significant responses to the war and the music industry's apathy, made them so. They were reported—and discussed—worldwide.

Record sales alone don't make Sinéad that important: the raw, unmeditated, genuineness of her rebellion does. She's a spokesperson because she speaks. In today's homogeneous, timid American society, that's all it takes.

The previous August Sinéad had caused a tremendous stir by refusing to allow an arena to play the national anthem before her concert. The press rose like a mob to lynch her. Through the furor she protested she'd been misunderstood, and issued a carefully constructed press release trying to explain her position. In reality no explanation would have

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTON CORBIJN

Materiał chroniony prawem autorskim

mattered to the war-frenzied mob. America was finally going to give itself amnesty for Vietnam and no head-shaved, Irish 23-year-old woman was going to interfere with that.

Unapologetic, Sinéad withdrew to London, where she lives, and studied acting. She says she's going to play Joan of Arc in the planned movie. In July 1991 she released *My Special Child*, a four-song EP, donating the revenues to the International Red Cross Kurdish Relief program.

We met at her manager's West London office, and talked in an insufferably hot conference room with the windows shut to keep the midday noise out. She thought it was going to be a three cigarette interview, laying them out neatly, side by side, in front of her like pencils. It turned out to be a nine cigarette interview.

When it was over, I played with her four-year-old son Jake while she went to make some phone calls. He kept kicking me—his idea of fun. I picked him up and held him by his ankles upside down over my shoulder—my idea of fun. "You smell pooey," he announced shrilly. "You've got a lot of balls for someone upside down in midair," I told him. Then I realized, that describes Sinéad perfectly.

SPIN: What made you want to do the *My Special Child* record?

O'Connor: I had written the song from my own experience. I wanted to put it out and use the money to raise awareness of child abuse. Then the Kurdish thing came up and seemed really urgent, so I thought I'd do that. The song itself is about my experience with having had an abortion last year and how I dealt with that and how it made me feel.

SPIN: What made you want to get an abortion?

O'Connor: Well, I didn't really want to. The pregnancy had been planned, and I was madly in love with the father of the child. However, things didn't really work out between us. We were fighting. I was on tour, and I was feeling sick all the time. I didn't know what to do, and he wasn't really interested in the child. So I was left with the decision of whether or not to have the child, knowing that the father wasn't going to be around. I decided that it was better not to and that I would have a child at a later stage when his father would be around and involved. I didn't feel that I could handle it by myself.

SPIN: Did that trouble you deeply?

O'Connor: Yeah, because it was planned and I was very happy about it. I'd had three miscarriages previously, and I was quite worried about whether I was going to be able to hold on to the pregnancy and it looked like I was going to. So I was very distraught; it wasn't a decision that I made lightly or that anyone makes lightly. It took me a year to get over it, but it was the right decision. I just believe that if a child is meant to be born it will be born. It doesn't really matter whether you have an abortion or a miscarriage. The whole issue is pro-choice. I wouldn't lobby for or against abortion. But I would lobby very strongly for the right of women to have control over their own bodies and make decisions for themselves. Nobody has the right to tell anyone else what to think or believe. Especially the Catholic church with the amount of murdering and pillaging that it's done.

"The cause of all of the world's problems, as far as I'm concerned, is child abuse."

SPIN: How much influence has growing up Catholic had on you?

O'Connor: It was never a really large part of my life. I always believed in God and the Virgin Mary and the immaculate conception and I love those things. So I just took from Catholicism what I loved about it, which was the image of her and all those sorts of stories. But I didn't feel that it fucked me up at all, I didn't really take it that seriously. I just took from it what I liked and what made sense to me and what appealed to me. I would have had the beliefs that I have anyway.

SPIN: Do you believe in heaven and hell?

O'Connor: No, I don't believe in heaven or hell. I don't believe in any sort of burning. I don't believe it's right to teach children that God is somebody that will punish them if they misbehave, that God isn't somebody who understands. That's an abuse of children.

SPIN: Do you believe in heaven?

O'Connor: I believe in different levels of spiritual attainment and the highest level is something that somebody like Christ achieved. The highest level of spiritual attainment is the closest thing to heaven. But I don't believe in heaven and hell as they're depicted.

SPIN: You grew up in Ireland, surrounded by all this Catholic mythology.

O'Connor: I can sift off the bullshit because there's what's called the church triumphant and the church militant. The church triumphant is basically God and the saints and everybody else, the church militant is the church on earth which I have no respect for.

SPIN: When you were growing up you were surrounded by great pain. Did you think that God had deserted you?

O'Connor: No, I believed in God very much. I didn't believe there was anything to punish me or I didn't believe I had been deserted. I always believed and prayed all the time and took great comfort particularly from the mother of God.

SPIN: Were you lonely as a child?

O'Connor: Yeah, I would say that I was, but I don't think I knew that I was lonely. But I found it very difficult to speak to people. I just sat at the back of the class like this (*hunches over*), and that's why my posture is so bad. I never spoke to anybody and I didn't socialize, I didn't know how to. I couldn't up to a year ago even look a person in the face when I was talking to them.

SPIN: Why were you so shy, and how did you overcome it a year ago?

O'Connor: I forced myself to get over it, and I'm not particularly over it. But I forced myself because I couldn't function and I just couldn't continue to be that way. What made me that way was the abuse and the subsequent lack of assistance or understanding from anybody outside my home situation.

SPIN: What age are you talking about here? Eight years old?

O'Connor: Smaller than that even. If a child is being abused it will react in any number of different ways. What I did was I went into myself. I couldn't communicate with anybody, I couldn't study. I could read and write but I had no interest in it, I couldn't get out of my own head.

SPIN: Were you physically terrified?

O'Connor: Yeah, I grew up in a state of terror, constantly. I'm one of millions of people who grew up in the same situation, who grew up terrified constantly.

SPIN: What did you think of? Did you fantasize about things that later became songs?

O'Connor: Yeah, I lived in a fantasy land, that's how I survived.

SPIN: I grew up in a broken marriage, which was, thank God, not abusive. The family was very together. But I was effectively running the family at 15.

O'Connor: Well, that's an abuse.

SPIN: Yeah, but a mild form.

O'Connor: Well, what abuse constitutes is not allowing a child to be itself, not allowing a child to be a child.

SPIN: Don't you think the real world does that anyway?

O'Connor: It shouldn't.

SPIN: Well, in a perfect world it wouldn't.

O'Connor: It can be a perfect world. The cause of all of the world's problems, as far as I'm concerned, is child abuse. It's the lack of understanding of children and of what they are and of the fact that they must be allowed to be themselves and form their own opinions and make decisions for themselves. From the moment a child is born, certainly in America and I think everywhere else, but it's most obvious in America, the child is conditioned. Everything that the child will see on the television or will learn in school or will hear on the radio or read in the magazines, or anything that it's exposed to, is set out to form this child into a specific kind of person, one who doesn't think for itself, one who doesn't have opinions of its own and one who has no spirit of its own. From the time a child sets foot in school, it's fucked, as far as being itself is concerned. You may not ask questions, you may not have opinions of your own. You just learn what you're taught in your history book, which is all lies, and that is what you must believe.

SPIN: Do you think that the media deprograms people?

O'Connor: I think it has been very cleverly em-

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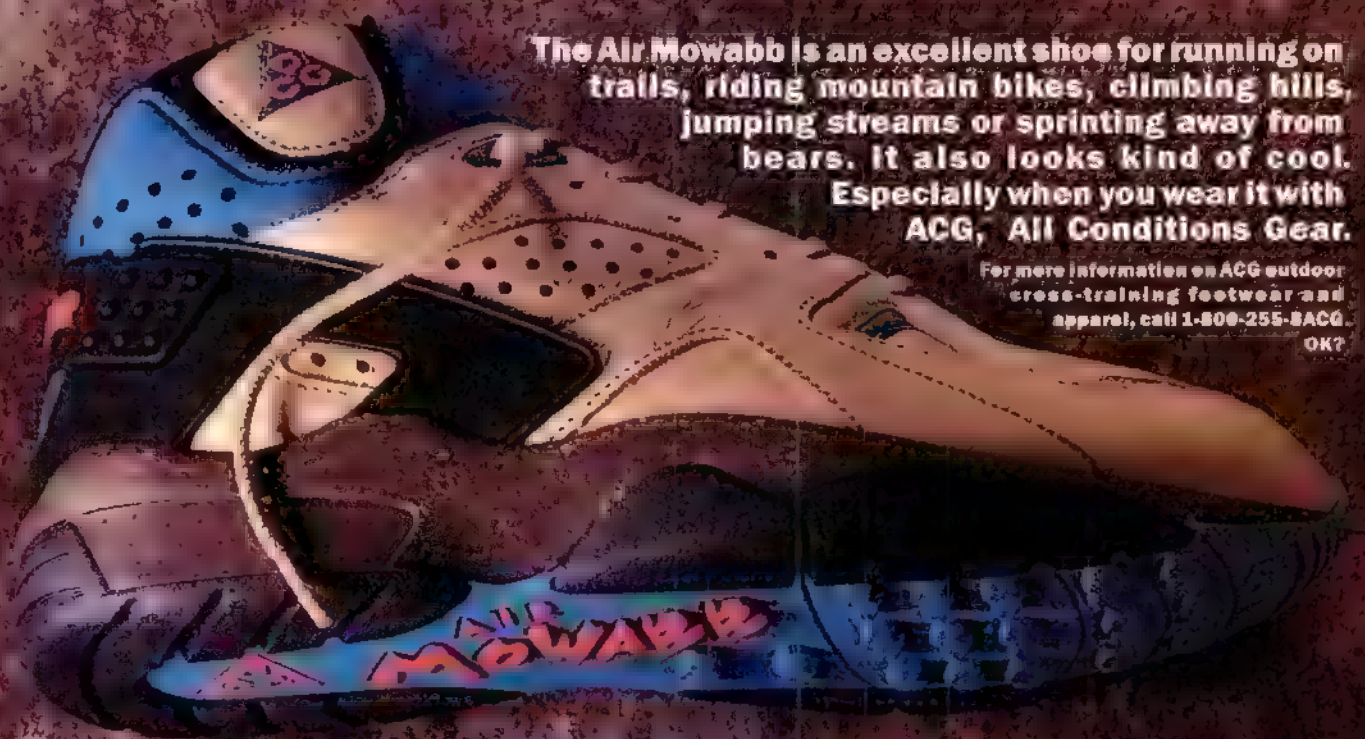

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ployed to condition people. Certainly America is the most obvious example, although it's the same all over the world. I think that television should be abolished completely. I think it's completely destructive and there's nothing positive about it, nothing at all.

SPIN: What about MTV?

O'Connor: It should be abolished.

SPIN: Why do you say that?

O'Connor: Because TV has killed free thinking. TV has killed art, it's killed poetry, it's killed theater, it's killed all those kinds of things. It conditions people; they just sit in front of it all day and believe what it tells them. Apart from that, purely from a scientific point of view—MTV being the worst example of this—if an image keeps changing really quickly your brain doesn't learn to concentrate, and it gets so that you can't concentrate because you get so used to seeing things only for a second that you don't take in what you're seeing. It's not good for people who want to study or learn something.

We as a race have lost our spirituality. We've lost contact with who we are and what our purpose for existence is and we've lost contact with God. The reason for that is that we started going into other people's countries and wiping out races and wiping out cultures in order to achieve, materially.

Through the loss of our spirituality, we feel empty. We have an enormous hole in ourselves and I don't think that anyone can say that they don't feel a huge emptiness in their lives, which they try to fill materially, because that is all they see on television or in the paper. They see that people who achieve materially are happy, so to fill their emptiness that's what they go for. They go for drugs, they go for alcohol, they go for sex, they go for cigarettes, all to fill up the void. Never anywhere do they see any information telling them that they could fill it in another way. That if you have peace within yourselves, that you will attract peaceful things. You're taught that you've got to go work for a living. You've got to do some fucking job that you hate, just so that you can earn enough money to put food in your mouth and never will you discover who you are or what you can actually do.

The basic problem of the whole world is child abuse.

SPIN: That's an incredibly sweeping definition.

O'Connor: If you look throughout history, all serial killers have been abused as children. All of them, without exception. All alcoholics have been abused as children. All drug addicts. All rapists. All sexual offenders have been abused as children. Hitler was an abused child; Saddam Hussein was an abused child.

SPIN: How did you get over it? You've got great strength and courage.

O'Connor: Well, the word courage means quite literally being afraid but going on. I'm still getting over it, but how I got over it was realizing that the cause was that nobody said anything about it. It was a continuing cycle—it's a cycle of abuse. A child is abused, it never expresses itself because it's never encouraged to express itself. It's encouraged just to shut the fuck up. I realized there was an ongoing cycle. I realized that I was very, very fucked up and that I had to do a lot of work on myself and that I had to go and get help.

SPIN: Did you see a therapist?

O'Connor: No. What I believe in most are the twelve-step groups—whether they're Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous. There's one that's called Adult Children of Alcoholics/Dysfunctional Families, and that's where I went.

SPIN: And that helped?

O'Connor: Yeah, absolutely. It helps you to learn that it's not your fault how fucked up you are and everything else is not your fault. I keep thinking of the people that are in college in America, the people that would be around the same age as me, or younger, and I imagine that there are an awful lot of them who have experienced abuse of one kind or another. And I'm trying to explain it so that they will understand that you get to a stage where you just think you are a piece of shit—that's what it does to you, you think that you're a piece of shit. You think that you are worthless, you think you're ugly. Everytime you look in the mirror you just see an ugly wanker.

"Madonna, in an abusive way toward me, said that I was about as sexy as a venetian blind—the woman that America looks up to as being a campaigner for women, slagging off another woman for not being sexy."

SPIN: Do you feel that way?

O'Connor: Yeah, I do.

SPIN: You're incredibly beautiful.

O'Connor: I have no concept of that.

SPIN: But why not? I'm not the first guy that has said that.

O'Connor: It doesn't matter what anyone says. I stand on stage maybe seven nights a week with five thousand people applauding me and telling me I'm wonderful, but it doesn't make any difference to me, because I don't love myself. Now I do, but up to that point I didn't. It doesn't matter who tells you you're wonderful if you don't think it and if your mother and father didn't think it. You're never going to think it unless you work on yourself and learn that you are lovable.

SPIN: What do you recommend to people who have been abused?

O'Connor: The first thing that I would say to those people is that I have felt exactly as I know those people feel. And you have to acknowledge, in the first place, that you have been affected and that you have every right to say, yes, you've been abused and you've been treated badly and unfairly. A lot of the time I felt if I talked about the abuse that I was making a big deal out of nothing, which of course is bullshit. You think that you've no right to the feelings you feel because that's what you've been told all your life. You've been beaten up for feeling the way you feel. So you start to build up a false self in order to please everybody, to make them like you.

I would say go to the twelve-step groups or read the John Bradshaw-Alice Miller books. They are huge proponents of the adult-child syndrome, which is literally this—that if a child experiences something that's very, very shocking and traumatic it will cut itself off from experiencing the thing consciously. Their brain cuts out because it's too shocking for them so they only experience it subconsciously. They don't feel anything. It can be scared by it, but it doesn't know what it feels. And the feelings build up and build up and build up as you grow up. You are literally arrested at that stage of your development. You are three years of age walking around in a fifty-year-old body. The world is being run by adult children.

It's literally that you are living in here (*indicates her torso*) and you are this size (*holds her hands two feet apart*) and you are in a grown-up body. I used to have tantrums at twenty-one years of age, I used to behave like a three-year-old child. I had no idea what I was doing. I used to look at myself and say, "What the fuck are you doing?" even while I would be doing it. Screaming and being upset and not being able to get out of bed, you know, just crying all day long, just really fucking angry, and wanting to just be a bitch to people. And I'd have no control over myself. You are being controlled by your child. It is literally the puppet master. And you need to get in touch with it and to help it grow up. It's terrified.

SPIN: What were your individual experiences?

O'Connor: I experienced abuse on every level that you can imagine. My mother was a very unhappy woman, who was very, very violent and found it very difficult to cope with life, because of obviously her own experiences as a child. I was beaten up very severely with every kind of implement you can imagine yourself being beaten with. And I was starved, I was locked in my room for days at a time without being fed, with no clothes. I was made to sleep in the garden of my house overnight. I lived for a summer in the garden of my house.

SPIN: How old were you?

O'Connor: At that stage, I was about twelve. But earlier than that I had been made to sleep with my brothers and my sister in the garden and I had been starved, et cetera. And I had been psychologically abused by being told that I was a piece of shit all my life, that it was my fault that my parents split up. That I was dirty, I was filthy, that I was kinky. I was, you know, basically a piece of shit because I was a girl and that I was never any good.

SPIN: Were you the oldest?

O'Connor: No my brother was the oldest. I was beaten up every single day and so were the others. Very, very badly. I lived my life in a state of terror. Merely the sounds of my mother's feet on the hearth ceiling were enough to send us into spasms of complete terror. We were neglected, we were beaten, we were abused psychologically and emotionally.

SPIN: When did it stop?

O'Connor: When I left my mother, when I was thirteen. I want to point out that I have worked everything out with my family about this. And I love my mother and my father very much indeed.

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I'm not saying, "Bastards," or "Woe is me" or all that stuff which is an important point for me to make for my family. But also for other people—that it can be done.

I had always been encouraged to steal and one of the ways we made sure my mother didn't beat us up was to come home with money and things like that, so myself and my sister stole. We never went to bed before two o'clock in the morning, we never did homework, so I never did well in school. I have no qualifications at all as a result of it. We were always sick, we were always completely fucked up. So by the time I left, I didn't know who the fuck I was or what I was doing. I had always been in trouble with the police for stealing. So when I went to live with my father, suddenly I had all this freedom and I didn't know how to deal with it. So I started flunking out of school and still stealing. I got sent to this place called a rehabilitation center for girls with behavior problems. But at no stage was I rehabilitated or were any of the other girls. They were nice people, but nobody ever sat me down and worked with me in order to rehabilitate me back into society. And I was punished basically for being who I was again and rejected for being who I was again. For being what my parents had made me into, and what society had made my parents into.

It isn't enough to take a child from its family. The parents of the children need help. It's not enough to take their children from them or lock them up. The laws need to be changed as far as what can be done to help a child. The police used to come to our house on numerous occasions because the neighbors heard us screaming and they'd phone, and the police would come in and they'd just say, "Is everything alright?" and we'd be shitting ourselves because we couldn't say it wasn't alright 'cause what the fuck were they going to do about it? Go back again and then we'd get the shit kicked out of us if we said it wasn't alright, so we'd just sit there and say, "Yeah, everything is fine." And they'd go off again.

There's nothing that the police can do. There should be more help from governments for women with children. Women lose themselves when they have children. Women shouldn't be told that they need to be in the home twenty-four hours a day seven days a week because that's just not right. A woman needs to be herself and have her own life. So governments should help with things like that.

I grew up being told that I was ugly, that my body was something to be ashamed of, that sex was something to be ashamed of and that if you liked it, you were like a slut, a piece of shit. And I was not told that sex was something that naturally happened between two people who really loved and understood each other. I was taught by the media that sex was something I could just do with anybody and that it was perfectly acceptable. I was told that by rock'n'roll as well.

SPIN: Was that appealing when rock'n'roll told you that?

O'Connor: Sex seems to be the only situation in which people can feel love. It's the only place that they can feel intimacy so they go around doing it with everybody left, right, and center. And it doesn't work. It just doesn't work like that. That's what we see so that's what we go for. If we saw something else we might go for that.

SPIN: Did the church confuse you about sex?

O'Connor: As far as I'm concerned, the church has no right to open up its mouth about sex for these reasons. First of all, none of them ever have sex, at least they're not supposed to. The second reason is that they do have sex. Priests in Ireland at the time of the abortion referendum were going around fucking young girls and getting them pregnant. I know of many instances. I know a woman who has been having an affair with a priest for the last twenty years. He has been a priest throughout the abortion referendum, the divorce referendum, et cetera. Now if she had become pregnant what would he have done? I know of another case of a priest who got a girl pregnant and made her go to London and have an abortion and met her back off the boat, looking at his watch to make sure he could get back in time for mass. At the time of the abortion referendum. They can't fucking say a word about it, because they're all shagging left, right and center and they can sue me for that but it's the fucking truth. They should not open their mouths.

"I contemplated killing myself on numerous occasions. Because I just couldn't see that there was any way out. But now it's fine and we worked it out because we love each other and love is the thing that wins."

SPIN: What about the way sex is portrayed in rap?

O'Connor: Of course, there's sexism, but if you're going to give out about it in black music then give the fuck out about it in white music, too. There are examples of it all over the place of appalling videos of women being abused. What about that "Cherry Pie" record with the video with the girl being hosed down? I mean, what's that saying? What about "Love in an Elevator"? What's that all about? Teaching people that they can just go and pick up some girl in an elevator and have sex with her?

SPIN: It's all about fantasy, black or white. Rock'n'roll aims at being entertaining fantasy.

O'Connor: I don't believe that rock'n'roll is all about entertainment.

SPIN: I don't either, but it's certainly an entertainment medium.

O'Connor: It has become purely an entertainment medium.

SPIN: It was always going to.

O'Connor: No, no it wasn't. Look at the '60s. Yeah, there was always entertainers and other people—communicators—and everyone got their records played. And then people began to realize that these people had far too much power and they stopped playing the records of the communicators. The entertainers are the ones that are pushed to the forefront, the ones that don't really say anything about anything but they just write really nice songs that everyone enjoys. Which are great, but the rest of us get pushed back. We don't get our records played, we don't win Grammys. We don't win awards for our ability to . . .

SPIN: You get your records played.

O'Connor: I don't. "Nothing Compares 2 U" got played. I never got a record played before that, and I probably won't get one played since.

SPIN: I think you will.

O'Connor: I don't think so. It's nothing to do with the audience. Because the audience only know what they hear and if they don't hear everything then obviously they can't form an opinion.

SPIN: Isn't this a chicken-or-the-egg thing though? I mean the radio playlist and the MTV heavy-rotation list comes down to what the audience requests.

O'Connor: They request what they're used to.

SPIN: Do you think England and America have become apathetic, sleepy societies?

O'Connor: We've been made sleepy. We've been made to not want anything, into a race that questions nothing. There is no concept of the evil that goes on, of the manipulation and the controlling. That everything they see has been fed to them in order to make them into a kind of person who will not question everything, who will fight for America, and think that they're doing a fucking good thing.

SPIN: What did you think about the Gulf War?

O'Connor: I thought that it was despicable. I thought it was despicable because people were led to and the truth will come out about that war.

SPIN: I thought it was disgusting because it wasn't liberation we were reveling in, which was the one positive thing that came out of it.

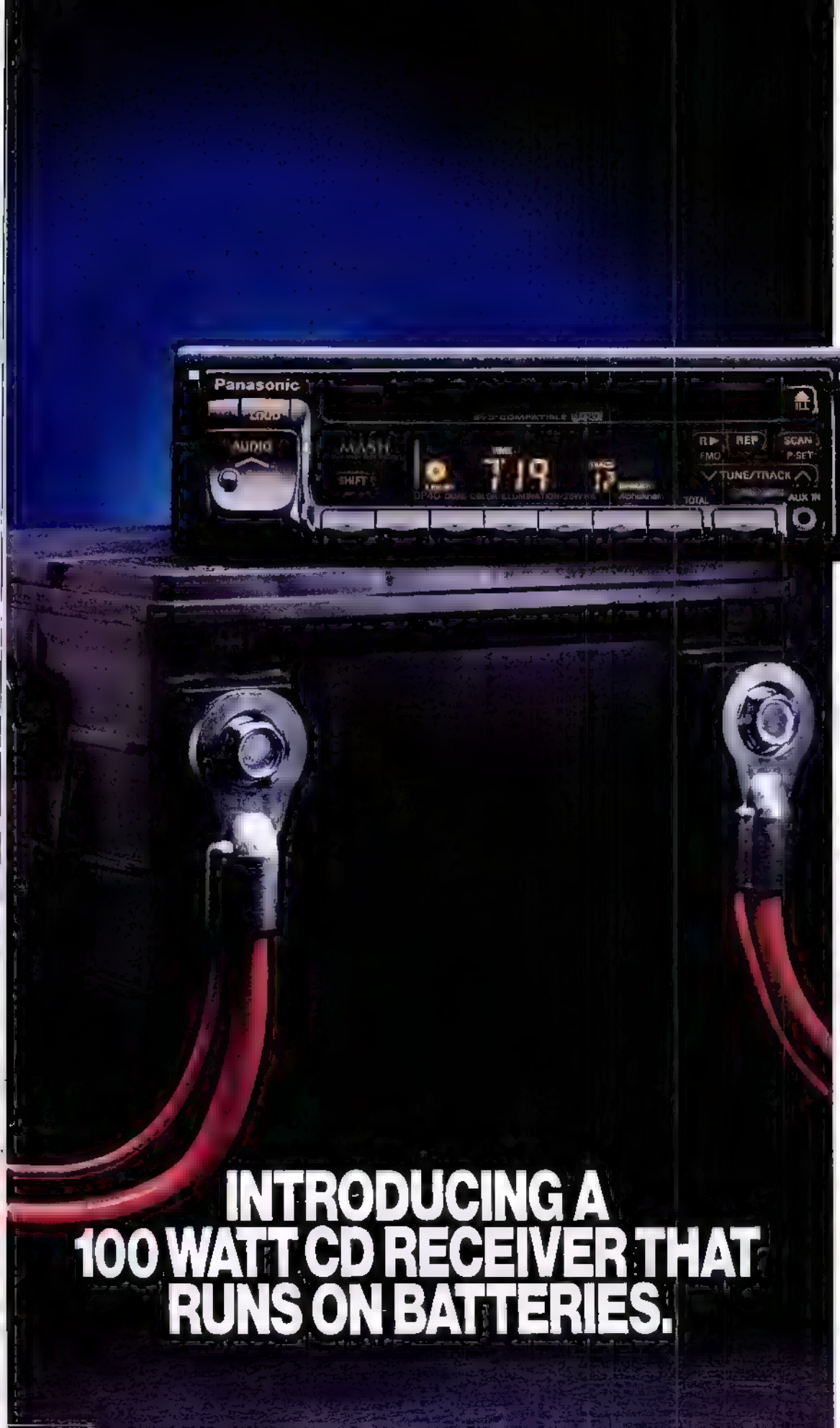
O'Connor: That's not why the war happened. Do you think America gave a shit about the people in Kuwait? What about what happened in Panama?

SPIN: Stay on Kuwait. The U.S. essentially encouraged Iraq to invade Kuwait, we know that for a fact, but what I'm getting at is that there wasn't a celebration of the fact that brother mankind was liberated. It was a celebration that we beat the shit out of somebody.

O'Connor: That's what we've been made into. We're quite willing for our own sons to be killed for that reason. We think that that's a good thing. We don't question. We don't say, "Well, why is my son in Kuwait?" We say, "My son's in Kuwait, isn't it great?" That's abuse of children. The fact that they're selling to young children Gulf War stickers for their albums is disgusting. Completely disgusting. If all of the money they used on weapons was used for something constructive, was fed back into the earth, there is no reason in this day and age why every single person on this planet shouldn't have enough to eat. Every day in this world forty thousand children are starving to death, starving. Picture the image of your child starving to death. That's happening to forty thousand women today. There is no need for that.

SPIN: When you refused to let the national anthem be played before your concert, very few people defended your position.

O'Connor: And nobody defended me during the Grammy thing which I will remember. Nobody. When the whole thing happened at the beginning



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of this year. No fucker defended me, they're all chickenshit. I'm talking about artists.

SPIN: I thought it was interesting that people, like FM DJs, who are normally the most left-wing liberals, who play records like "Ohio" on the anniversary of Kent State, and "Give Peace a Chance," wanted to hang you.

O'Connor: That's trendy though. South Africa is trendy, Neil Young is trendy. It's safe.

SPIN: Why do you think people wanted to kick you out of the country?

O'Connor: Because I'm a girl, for a start. They would not be nearly as offended by it if I was a man. A woman with a shaved head who wears Doc Martens who doesn't comply with what is expected of women, who hasn't come through school and grown up to be what they wanted her to be, complaining about the American national anthem. They want to tell everyone that I'm evil.

SPIN: Looking back on the incident, would you do it differently?

O'Connor: No, absolutely not. I'm proud of it. Until my dying day I will be proud of that and of the Grammy thing. You know, put your fucking seat belts on 'cause I haven't finished yet.

SPIN: It's rare today, Sinéad, to encounter that kind of stand-taking.

O'Connor: We have no spirituality, that's what's wrong. We have no sense of what the fuck we're here for. We have no sense of—Jesus came here to show us that the truth was worth dying for. Jesus chose to be crucified, a most agonizing death and he shat himself. Don't let anybody say that he wasn't afraid. He sweated blood. But he did that rather than say that what he was saying wasn't the truth. And I believe that, and that's what I took from religion was that Jesus came to show me that the truth was worth fucking dying for.

SPIN: What happens if your next record comes out and your record company says, "Sinéad, you've got to apologize for this anthem thing 'cause no one's going to play it."

O'Connor: I don't give a shit whether I never get played on the radio or not, 'cause I just do what I do for myself and my record company understands that. They'd be cutting off their noses to spite their faces—do you thing they're going to say that, for Christ's sake, you know? And anyway, they're not stupid. They know that I'm not one in a million. I'm merely expressing the feelings of millions of people. I just have a platform to air those views, and I'm operating for loads of people. I'm operating for all the abused children and all the women and all of the people who have been completely and utterly oppressed.

SPIN: Is there really a societal fear of women?

O'Connor: Yes, and that's why women have been controlled. The women who are admired are the ones that have blond hair and big lips and wear red lipstick and wear short skirts, because that's an acceptable image of a woman.

SPIN: Why?

O'Connor: Because it's safe. It's not threatening, it's not intimidating. I'm threatening and I'm intimidating because I don't conform to any of those things and I just say what I think.

Madonna is probably the hugest model for women in America. There's a woman who people look up to as being a woman who campaigns for women's rights. A woman who, in an abusive way toward me, said that I looked like I had a run-in with a lawn mower and that I was about as sexy as a venetian blind. Now there's the woman that America looks up to as being a campaigner for women, slagging off another woman for not being sexy.

SPIN: What's the answer for women? I mean, I don't think you want to take that radical feminist. . . .

O'Connor: No I'm not a feminist or an anythingist. I'm just a humanist. I believe in human beings, and I believe in God. And I live my life through the things that I believe. That's all. I have a sense of why I'm on the earth, of where I go afterward.

SPIN: What drives you? What motivates you?

O'Connor: My belief in God motivates me.

SPIN: Do you see Jake as a manifestation of God?

O'Connor: Yeah, I do.

SPIN: When I first met you at SPIN one day, you struck me as very shy. Today you are certainly not shy. Do you feel that you turn the adversity in your life into fuel?

O'Connor: I don't let the adversity stop me. And I know the truth; I've seen examples of the existence of the truth and the existence of God. The examples are everywhere. I know that the truth is worth fighting for and worth dying for. It's worth anything. It's like Keith Richards said about his problem with the authorities and drugs: "I don't live by your petty rules." And I don't have to. And if there is anything I want to do, it is to show to everybody else that they don't have to either.

SPIN: Do you think that you are a moral person?

O'Connor: Yeah, I am extremely moral.

SPIN: Do you think you are a good person?

O'Connor: Yeah, I'm trying to be good. I'm not a bad person. I do my best to be as good as I can be. Or, rather, I do my best to live by the word of God.

I think organized religion is a crutch. 'Cause it's controlling. Organized religion tells you what to think, what to believe, tells you who to be. I don't believe in one Catholic church. I believe in every church. I believe in Buddhism. I believe in Hinduism. I believe in every religion. I believe you can take things from every religion. There is only one God. It's just different interpretations and many different things to learn. You shouldn't shut one out.

I used to lay in bed terrified at night thinking that I was going to burn in hell. It's an abuse to tell a child that God sees everything and knows what you think about and that you are going to be burned in hell. It's a huge abuse to teach children that God is not within themselves. That God is pollution. That God is bigger than them. That God is outside them. That is a lie. That's what causes the emptiness of children.

SPIN: Which artists do you think give a damn about anything other than their own success?

O'Connor: I think that the hip hop movement cares. It has its negative aspects—

SPIN: N.W.A couldn't give a damn.

O'Connor: N.W.A are relevant because they are speaking a truth. They are speaking about what life is like for some people. And if you don't like what N.W.A are saying then you've got to find out why they are saying it. What makes young men grow up with those attitudes toward women? Child abuse.

continued on page 116

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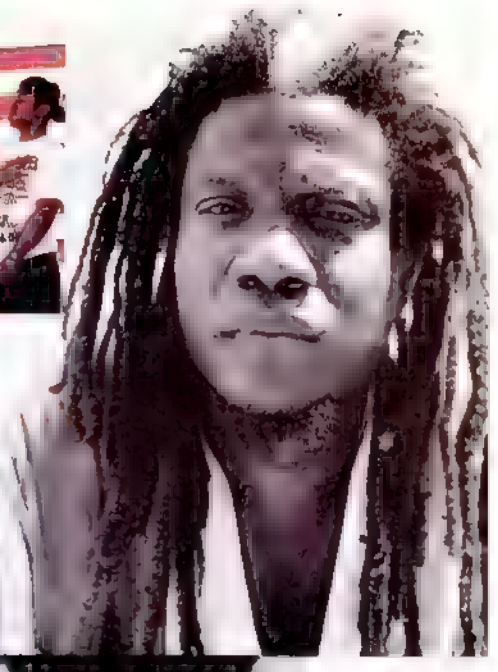
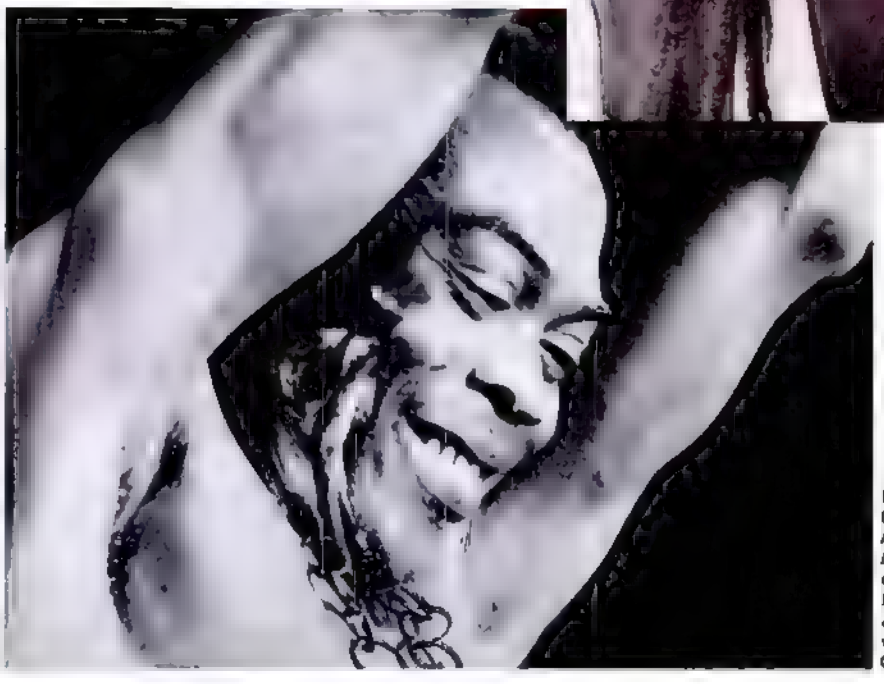


Music censors from Plato to the present have always known that music is the greatest threat to tyranny of the mind, and thus to power itself.

JEFFERSON MORLEY and NATHANIEL WICE

add up currencies from around the world to determine the price of free expression.



Musical heretics Nigeria's Fela Anikulapo Kuti, *left*, Jamaican dancehall's Mutabaruka, *above*, and our very own 2 Live Crew, *top left*.

"Music is a herald, for change is inscribed in noise faster than it transforms society. Listening to music is listening to all noise, realizing that its appropriation and control is a reflection of power, that it is essentially political."

—*Jacques Attali,* Noise

IN SEPTEMBER 1976, THE PLASTIC PEOPLE OF the Universe went on trial in Czechoslovakia. The Plastic People were an underground rock band in Prague with a growing following of young fans, musicians, poets, artists, and writers. The band's saxophonist and artistic director were charged with "disturbing the peace," as was a folksinger and a member of a sister punk band called DG 307.

Vaclav Havel was then an obscure playwright and a close friend of the Plastic People; they shared a fondness for the music of the Velvet Underground and the art of Andy Warhol. Havel attended the trial and discovered in the confrontation between the ridiculous prosecutor and the dignified rock musicians an essential truth about the political world.

"What was the public prosecutor originally supposed to have been?" Havel asked in an essay included with the Plastic People's first album. "Undoubtedly, a plausible spokesman and guardian of the interest of society, demonstrating convincingly the offensiveness of the defendant's creative work, its vulgarity, immorality, and antisocial impact." The trial, Havel noted, exposed the prosecutor as something else: ". . . The symbol of an inflated and straitlaced power persecuting everything that it cannot include in its sterile notions of life,

Thomas Mapfumo's *chimurenga* music foreshadowed Zimbabwe's revolution of independence.

everything unusual, risky, spontaneous, and incorruptible, everything that is different from itself. . . .He was a mouthpiece for the world of spiritual manipulation, widespread opportunism, emotional sterility, fundamental banality, and moral prudery. In short," Havel concluded, "he represented the world of the 'masters.' "

The masters, according to Havel, are those people in power who mouth "religious, liberal, patriotic, or socialist clichés . . . who have always tried to make artists into lackeys and whom artists have always rebelled against, or, at the very least, have always ridiculed."

The Plastic People were found guilty and sentenced to jail terms ranging from nine months to three years. Havel, inspired by their example, cofounded Charta 77, the Nobel Prize-winning human-rights organization. The Plastic People continued to perform underground, and clandestinely recorded two albums at Havel's country house. Havel himself went to jail.

Thirteen years after the trial of the Plastic People, the persecuted succeeded the persecutors. Havel led a broad coalition that ousted the Communists in November 1989 and by acclaim was elevated to the presidency of the country. By then, the musicians which had set his political career in motion had evolved into a new band, Pulnoc ("midnight"). Last spring Pulnoc became the first East European rock band to land a recording contract with a major Western corporate record label. Their debut album, *City of Hysteria* (reviewed on page 113), is being released this fall with liner notes by President Vaclav Havel.

The music of the Plastic People—experimental, absurdist rock—was the herald of change in Czechoslovakia. In Chile, political change was inscribed in the impassioned, poetic folk songs of Victor Jara, the folksinger who was executed in 1973 by the military regime after rallying the spirits of thousands of political prisoners being held in a football stadium. Seventeen years later, soon after the regime fell, Amnesty International held one of its Human Rights Now! concert series in that same stadium. In Zimbabwe, bandleader Thomas Mapfumo forged a vibrant new style called *chimurenga* in the mid-1970s. The electrified synthesis of Zairian pop, Jamaican reggae, and traditional Zulu music soon assumed potent political meanings in the country's struggle for independence against the white minority government. The music was banned and Mapfumo was sent to jail, but in 1980 the revolution succeeded.

Happy endings in the struggle for freedom of musical expression around the world can be as misleading as they are reassuring. Freedom of expression is something that must be won again and again. Now that Communism has collapsed in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, socialist clichés are not likely to be used any time soon to justify attacks on freedom of expression. But as Havel noted, "the masters" also use liberal, patriotic, and religious clichés to silence the sounds they fear. Often they are the same clichés: The terms that Czech Communist prosecutors used to describe the music of the Plastic People in 1976 were quite similar to those used by Florida prosecutors to describe the music of 2 Live Crew at the Miami rap group's trial in 1990.

The fear of music is deeply rooted in Western civilization. Plato regarded music as the most important part of education because "rhythm and harmony find their way into the inward places of the soul." To prevent music's unique power from corrupting the young, he favored the banning of certain harmonies and instruments. ("The flute is worse than all the stringed instruments put together.") Guardians of Plato's republic were duty-bound to ban artists whose work exhibited "vice, intemperance, meanness, and indecency." In the Middle Ages, the church proscribed "the Devil's chords." The language of the masters has not changed much in the centuries since: *Immoral, antisocial, obscene, disorderly, subversive,* and *satanic* pretty much covers the vocabulary of the censors.

Musicians, by contrast, speak in the infinitely various language of artfully arranged noise. There are as many justifications for free musical expression as there are musicians.

THE PLASTIC PEOPLE DENIED THAT THEY SPOKE for any cause besides their own idiosyncratic brand of art rock. They had no interest in changing the government or society. If the Communists had left them alone, they would not have been unhappy. Milan Hlavsa, the bass player and founder of the Plastic People and Pulnoc, said, "We were dissidents against our will."

Cui Jian, the leading Chinese rock star of the mid-1980s, was more politically conscious. Born in 1961, Cui Jian grew up in Beijing during the turbulent years of the Cultural Revolution, when any artistic expression was suspect. He began his singing career in the early '80s as, in the words of W.L. Chong, a critic of Chinese pop music, just another sugary-voiced minstrel of the Hong Kong and Taiwan mainstream. Cui Jian became a star in 1985 when he played a concert in Beijing that was called China's first rock'n'roll event. His song "Yi Wu Suo You" ("I've Got Nothing"), a plaintive song of a man being laughed at for his unrequited love, was an instant hit. It is a Chinese tradition to attach political importance to love songs, and "Yi Wu Suo You" quickly became an anthem for young urban Chinese disaffected with the heavy hand of the Communist government.

"Art and culture are like a lake," China's repeatedly censored singer Cui Jian said in 1990. "Politics is like a boat. I don't worry for a second whether or not the boat is about to sink. I am much more fascinated by the water. The boat has to take the water into account."

New musical ideas were as integral to Cui Jian's popular success as his political consciousness. He picked up a band called Ado in the jazz cafés of the Chinese capital. Ado included a Hungarian bass player named Balázs and a guitarist from Madagascar named Eddie. Ado's technical proficiency and knowledge of Western rock was a revelation to the Chinese. The band, in addition to Cui Jian, had a Chinese percussionist and saxo-

DIRK VANDENBERK

CAPTAIN MORGAN ORIGINAL SPICED RUM

phonist. Its sound combined electric guitars with Chinese instruments like the *dizi* (a bamboo flute) and *suona* (a Chinese horn) to produce a rough Chinese interpretation of those symbols of Western freedom and prosperity—Talking Heads and the Police.

Only a few of Cui Jian's songs were explicitly political, but one, "Rock and Roll on the New Long March," the title song of his second album, satirized the central patriotic myth of the Chinese Communist revolution, the Long March. The original Long March took place from 1934 to 1935, when Mao Zedong and his relatively small band of Communist followers were on the brink of defeat. Mao led 90,000 men, women, and children in a retreat through the mountains, where they regrouped and returned one year later from their 6,000-mile trek to overthrow the Nationalist government. The New Long March was the slogan adopted by the Communists in 1978 to promote a series of economic reforms. Cui Jian's song parodied both the old and the new: The unheroic protagonist endures the hardship of his participation in a difficult journey with no understanding of where the march is headed. He has more than a sneaking suspicion that no one else knows either, but he shuts up and trudges along.

In 1987, Cui Jian was fired from his job for "indulging" in pop music. That same year, a veteran Communist complained about the band's sacrilegious rock version of "Nanniwan," a revolutionary ballad from the 1930s. After that, no performance halls would book Cui Jian's concerts. During the democracy movement in the spring of 1989, students sang "Yi Wu Suo You" to protest the government's refusal to enter into a dialogue with them. A group called Mayday performed the song in Tiananmen Square on May 20, 1989, in the heady days two weeks before the massacre.

Since then, Cui Jian has been stifled. A scheduled concert tour in the summer of 1990 was canceled by authorities who apparently feared the shows might become rallying grounds for opposition to the government. In 1991, a group of foreigners invited him to play a concert and once again, he was barred from performing.

In the transition to an open society, the price of free expression is no longer police intimidation or prison—it's $14.99 for CD, $9.99 for tape.

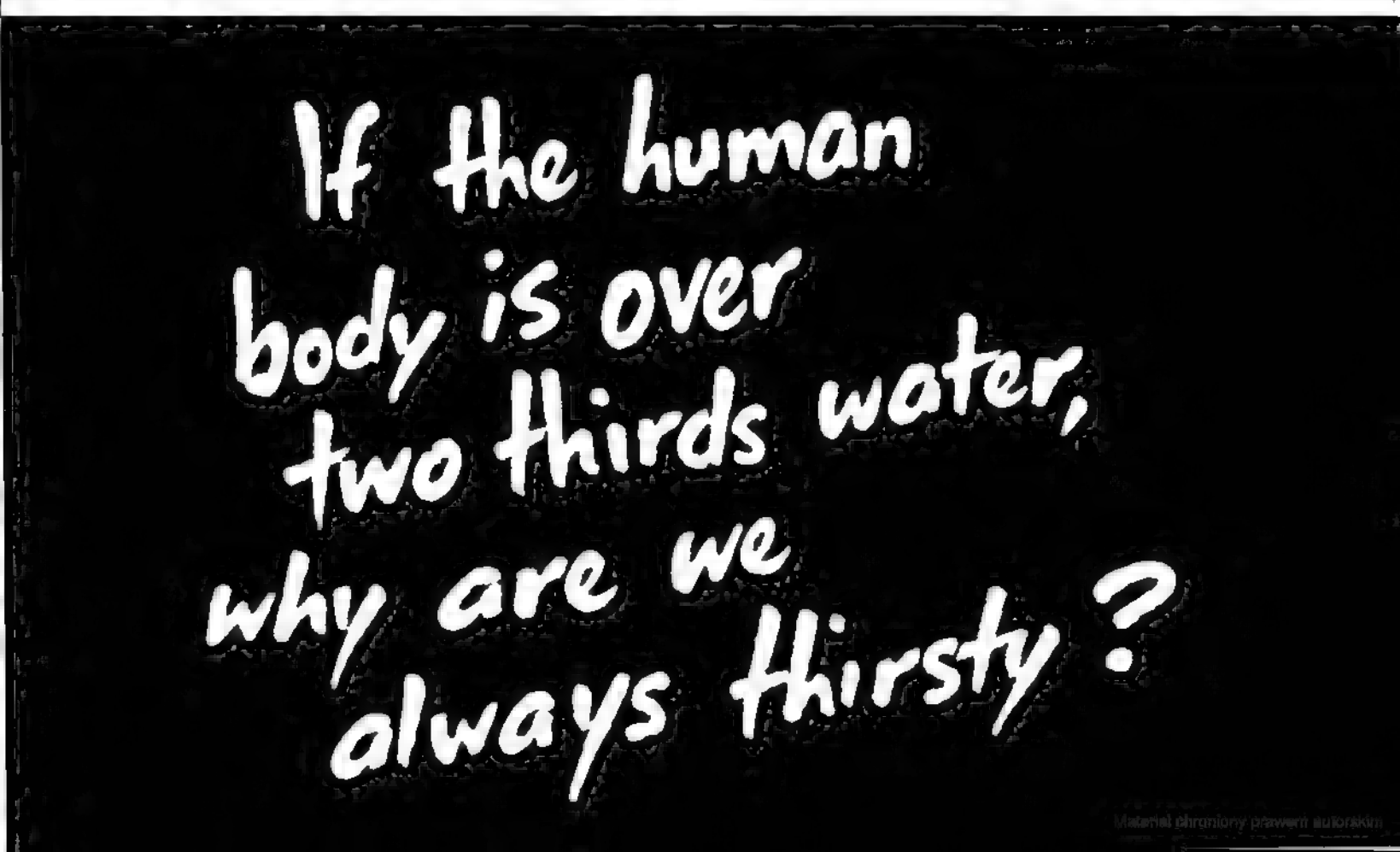
"Art and culture are like a lake," Cui Jian said in 1990. "Politics is like a boat. I don't worry for a second whether or not the boat is about to sink. I am much more fascinated by the water. The boat has to take the water into account."

In Cuba, the ship of state has learned to take music into account. In the early days of the Cuban Revolution, jazz was forbidden. "For a long time the government said jazz music was the music of imperialism," Arturo Sandoval, a protégé of Dizzy Gillespie and an acclaimed jazz trumpeter, told the *Washington Post* when he defected to the United States last year. Sandoval was jailed for four-and-a-half months while serving in the Cuban army. "They accused me of being a jazz lover. When you are a jazz lover, you are an American lover."

The sheer popularity of jazz in Cuba eventually forced the government to relent. In 1973, Sandoval founded Irakere, a jazz group which later won a Grammy. Sandoval was allowed to travel in Europe to play concert tours. But freedom of expression can be controlled by petty means, as well as by naked repression. In 1981 Sandoval formed his own group and got into more trouble simply trying to obtain instruments and guitar strings.

"We don't have any music shops in Cuba, Sandoval told the *Post*. "It's unbelievable. The government buys the instruments, and they give to the musicians the way they want—when they want to, and to whom they want to."

For Sandoval, the price of freedom was exile from his homeland, but as he told the *Post* he believes the collapse of Communism in Cuba is inevitable. "Everybody says in Cuba, 'All right, what are we waiting for now? It is impossible to think we are the only people in the world who are right [to hold onto Communism] and the rest of the people are wrong. I believe that is incredible."



IN COMMUNIST SOCIETIES, IN WHICH THE STATE seeks to politicize all aspects of life, freedom of expression often means freedom from politics, freedom to pursue art for art's sake. In authoritarian states where the rich and powerful seek to protect their own privileges, freedom of expression is most meaningful as the freedom to promote political change, the freedom to pursue art with a political purpose. For the Guatemalan musical-theatrical group Dos Que Tres, art and politics were one.

The group, known by the acronym 2Q3, was founded by workers at the Coca-Cola bottling plant in Guatemala City. (The name is a Spanish expression of ambivalence meaning roughly "Six of one, half a dozen of another.") Unionists had organized the plant in the late 1970s only to be greeted by the murder of seven workers and the disappearance of four more. In 1984-85, the workers occupied the bottling plant for 376 days, forcing the owners to recognize the union. The unionists formed 2Q3 partly as an organizing tool. Since 1985, the Coca-Cola union has become a leader in labor organizing in Guatemala. The songs and skits of 2Q3 satirized the country's corrupt politicians and army officers while persuading workers to stand up for their rights.

The silencing of 2Q3 began in February 1989 when a man named Fladio Pantaleón was wounded leaving a performance by the musical group. According to the Washington-based human-rights organization Americas Watch, his attackers wielded guns of a caliber only the security forces are permitted to carry. In July 1989, Pantaleón's brother Rolando, a member of the theater group, was kidnapped by three armed plainclothesmen. His body was found later that day with four bullet holes in the head and signs of torture.

Czechoslovakia's Pulnoc, *right*, having outlasted the old boss of Communism, now faces the new boss, the Western music business. *Below*, Pulnoc's lead singer, Michaela Nemcova (*left*) and bassist Milan Hlavsa

In August 1989, 70 members of the U.S. theater and film community wrote to the President of Guatemala protesting the murder and asking for an investigation. The government said it would respond but has taken no action. 2Q3 disbanded and its members have fled the country.

Art and politics are also inextricably entwined for Mzwakhe Mbuli, a South African dub poet. Mzwakhe was born in the late 1950s, in Sophiatown, which was then a kind of Greenwich Village for black South Africans. In 1966, blacks were forcibly relocated to Soweto. He saw white children on the school bus and wondered why he

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"From the earliest age I had a questioning mind," Mzwakhe said in an interview in 1988. He became politicized along with a generation of young black South Africans in 1976, when students in Soweto rose up to protest the introduction of Afrikaans, the language of the white minority, into the public schools. His debut as a poet came in 1981 when he recited some of his poems at a big funeral march, at the time the only occasion for which blacks could legally assemble in public. Mzwakhe came to be known as "the people's poet"; his only subject the struggle against apartheid.

The government banned Mzwakhe in 1985 and he spent years living underground, moving from home to home. Along the way, a white South African record producer arranged for him to recite his poetry to music. The album, *Change Is Pain*, was immediately banned. When the producer inquired which songs were objectionable, the censors replied that the entire album was "inflammatory." Possession of the album was a crime punishable by ten years in prison and/or a fine of up to $10,000.

"This is not poetry for reflection or description or comment," Mzwakhe said. "This is poetry for action."

Mzwakhe was arrested in 1988 and put into solitary confinement, not even allowed to have a pen or paper. When he was released he recorded a second album, *Unbroken Spirit*, which sold more than 25,000 copies. Mzwakhe was arrested again in March 1989 and charged with possession of a hand grenade. In 1990, he was cleared of the charges and granted a passport to travel abroad.

Mzwakhe now has counterparts among young Afrikaaners. In 1988 several bands of young white South Africans began playing rock that expressed their disenchantment with their society. A nationwide concert tour was organized, igniting a storm of protest from the conservative establishment. The music was labeled vulgar and satanic; the musicians were accused of drinking blood and wearing fetus earrings. The bands were banned from Afrikaans college campuses, resulting in massive student demonstrations. Johannes Kerkorrel, the leader of one of the leading bands of the Afrikaans new wave, told an interviewer in 1990, "Once the young Afrikaner says to the old, 'No, what you're doing [apartheid] is wrong,' it's final. The last sign."

SOMETIMES THE MASTERS FEAR NOT ONE particular artist but one particular song. In Jamaica, a song by dancehall rapper Mutabaruka called "The People's Court" has been banned from airplay because it pokes fun at Edward Seaga and Michael Manley, the country's two leading politicians.

Sometimes, the masters fear entire genres of music. In the United States, the popularity of rap and heavy metal has prompted political authorities to impose labeling laws designed to limit circulation of music that is out of favor with authorities. Although the issue no longer makes headlines, a growing network of local censors across North America are increasingly using the labels as legal evidence of obscenity. The *Toronto Star* gave credit last summer to Florida's 2 Live Crew prosecutor Jack Thompson for calling the latest N.W.A album to the attention of Ontario and Toronto police, who then warned retailers that selling the album might be against the law.

The Guatemalan police intimidated the union performance group 2Q3, *right*, into silence and exile. A member, Jose Rolando Pantaleón, *left*, was kidnapped and killed in July 1989.

In Greece, government officials recently withdrew from circulation a collection of *rembetika* music because they said it encouraged drug use. Rembetika originated in the poorer neighborhoods of Athens and Piraeus in the early part of the century. Minus the pro-drug lyrics, *rembetika* is the basis for much of Greece's best-selling popular music today. The songs, compiled by Michalis Daskalakis, a veteran *rambete*, included lyrics like "Give us our reefers so we can all get stoned," and "Give us the black stuff [hashish] from Constantinople and Persia so we can happy."

The collection was banned by something called the Government Control Committee, a state agency which was most active during Greece's dictatorship from 1967 to 1973. Ironically, the fight against the government censorship of the album was led by another government official, the minister of culture, Mikis Theodorakis, who condemned the government's authoritarian attitude toward art.

Sometimes the masters are clever enough to recognize that trying to silence artists may be counterproductive. In Nigeria, Fela Anikulapo Kuti, the bandleader beaten and arrested in 1977 by a government fearful of his criticism, can now performs freely and travel abroad in his country, even though others still cannot. In Kenya, authorities wanted to stamp out underground musical cassettes criticizing the government went after entrepreneurs not artists. The cassettes were reportedly being played in nightclubs and on private minibuses in the capital Nairobi. One song called "Who Killed Dr. Ouko?" criticized authorities for covering up the suspicious death of a top government official. Another called "Mtabi's Tribulations" supported Kenneth Mtabi, a leading advocate of a multiparty democracy. In the summer of 1990, a popular gospel singer named J.J. Wanyoki and members of another band were arrested but quickly released. But Joe Mwangi Mathai, a local record producer and five employees of his music store, were not spared. They were charged with making cassettes "with seditious intentions." Fifteen street venders who were selling the cassettes were also arrested. The arrest of street venders is less likely to cause a fuss than the arrest of a singer. Joe Mathai and his employees have since been released on bail.

TWO MYTHS ARE COMMON IN THE HISTORY OF the struggle for free expression. The first, especially popular now, is that popular music—especially rock—is the "music of rebellion," which challenges authoritarianism at every turn. In the Communist Soviet Union, authorities who otherwise tolerated little dissent had learned to live with rock'n'roll by the late '70s—and most rock musicians were content with their status as entertainers. Rock was and is important there as the music of rejection, but it was not the music of the rebellion that shattered the Soviet Union. The second myth is the myth of progressive history, that the forces of freedom are slowly but inevitably triumphing over the forces of tyranny. This Western cliché is especially popular as radical social transformation sweeps the once Communist world. The progressive myth neglects the timeless truth that when old masters are toppled, new masters are waiting in the wings.

In the East, the closed regimes are being dumped in favor of open markets. In the transition to an open society, the price of free expression is no longer police intimidation or prison—it's $14.99 for CD, $9.99 for tape. Few who live in open societies will doubt that this is an improvement; none should doubt that market systems have their own masters—corporations operating beyond the control of government. Markets also have their own clichés—that value is merely a matter of money—which are used to exclude musical voices and unsettling ideas.

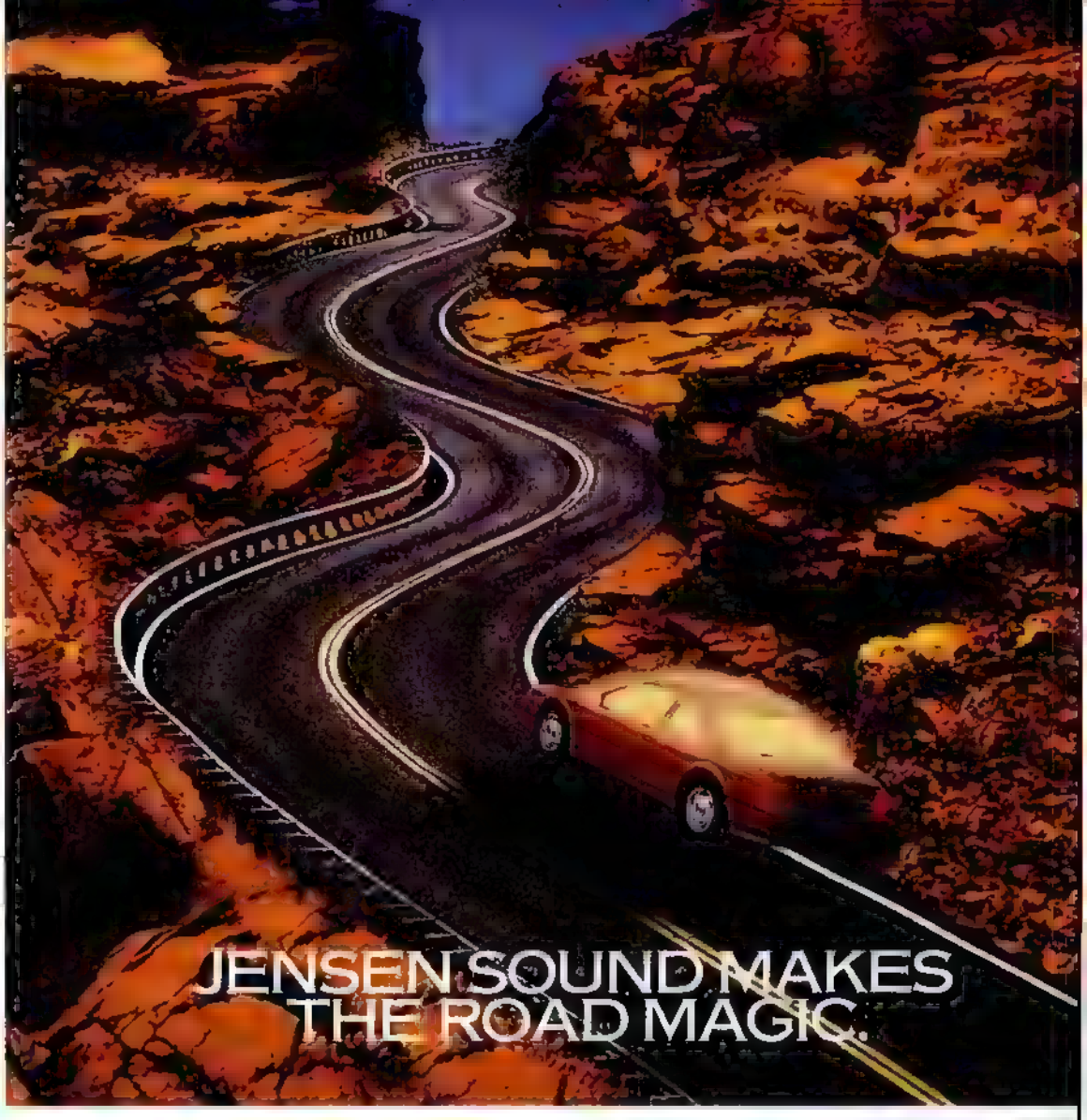
The struggle for the freedom of expression will go on in the new Union of Sovereign States just as

The terms that Czech Communist prosecutors used to describe the music of the Plastic People in 1976 were quite similar to those used by Florida prosecutors to describe the music of 2 Live Crew in 1990.

it goes on the United States of America and everywhere else. The struggle for freedom of expression is ultimately personal, a struggle to express oneself free of state coercion, religious dogma, patriotic certitude, or liberal pieties; free of the clichés of language and music. The enemy is not only authoritarian politicians but the authoritarian mentality that Vaclav Havel sensed in that Prague courtroom 15 years ago: the "inflated and straight-laced power persecuting everything that it cannot include in its sterile notions of life."

"When you write a song about an issue, a political issue, it's nice when that song becomes irrelevant— when you don't have to sing it anymore and you can get back to what you should be doing, which is actually singing about love, about dancing, about pleasure, and about joy."

STING



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PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

HOW TO ADOPT ONE

Perhaps Amnesty International's most effective human-rights device has been to call attention to abuses against specific individuals, and in so doing to underscore the fact that human-rights abuses are indeed crimes against *human beings*. Here are five prisoners of conscience; we urge each reader to adopt just one—as a personal pledge that *you* support Amnesty's efforts on behalf of other prisoners around the world. In the months to come, SPIN will track the progress of these five cases in a special "Amnesty Corner." Whatever you do, don't become a prisoner of your own conscience: Get active, spread the word to others, have your friends adopt their own prisoners, and contact the people below who can get these prisoners released.

Nguyen Chi Thien: Vietnam

Nguyen Chi Thien, a poet, has spent more than half of his life in detention—despite the fact that he is not known to have ever committed a serious offense. He was first arrested in 1958 when the North Vietnamese government decided to clamp down on dissident writers following a period of relative literary freedom known as the time of the "hundred flowers." Originally sentenced to two years hard labor for his part in publishing a magazine, he was released in 1961 only to be declared an "underdeveloped citizen" and sent to a "reeducation" camp. He was free again for a short time in 1964 but was soon back in reeducation in 1965. This time he was detained 13 years. He was released in 1978 but rearrested in 1979 after a manuscript of his poems, titled "Flowers From Hell," was published abroad. Nguyen Chi Thien's only "crime" was writing freely about his beliefs. Please write Vietnamese authorities asking that he be released immediately and unconditionally: *Do Muoi, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, The Council of Ministers, Hoi Dong Bo Truong, Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam.*

José Ramón García: Mexico

José Ramón García left his home for a political meeting on December 16, 1988. He never arrived and his whereabouts remain unknown. García had been a leading member of the Workers Revolutionary Party in Mexico and at the time of his disappearance was working on a campaign to publicize claims of election fraud in the July 1988 presidential elections. A vehicle believed to belong to the security forces was seen by witnesses outside his home, shortly before he disappeared. His disappearance was the first to occur under the current administration of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari. Please write the Mexican President urging him to ensure a full investigation is carried out in this case and that those found responsible are brought to justice: *Lic. Carlos Salinas de Gortari, President de la Republica, Palacio Nacional, 06067 Mexico DF, Mexico.*

Aung San Suu Kyi: Myanmar (Burma)

In 1990, Myanmar's voters gave the country's largest recognized political party, the National League for Democracy, an overwhelming mandate to govern. More than 80 percent of the voters cast ballots for the NLD, and for its general secretary, Aung San Suu Kyi, in an incredible election held under military-imposed martial law. However, more than one year after the national election, the military government continues to hold power and Aung San Suu Kyi remains under house arrest. She should be set free and allowed to govern peacefully. Please write demanding the immediate release of Aung San Suu Kyi: *General Saw Maung, Chairman, State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), c/o Ministry of Defense, Signal Pagoda Road, Yangon, Union of Myanmar (Burma).*

Vera and Orton Chirwa: Malawi

Vera Chirwa (*above*) and her husband Orton are serving life sentences for treason in Malawi, but Amnesty International believes they are imprisoned solely because of their political beliefs. In 1964, Orton Chirwa founded and became first President of independent Malawi, but stepped aside when Banda returned from exile. Within weeks of independence the Malawi Congress Party splintered and several cabinet ministers, including the Chirwas, fled into exile.

In January 1982 Malawi Radio announced that the Chirwas and their son had been arrested after they entered the country to overthrow the government. The Chirwas maintain that they were kidnapped and forcibly returned to Malawi. Write to Banda demanding their immediate release: *H.E. the Life President, Ngwazi Dr. Kamuzu Banda, Life President of the Republic of Malawi, Office of the President and Cabinet, Private Bag 388, Lilongwe 3, Malawi.*

Riad al-Turk: Syria

Riad al-Turk may be dying in prison. A lawyer and former first secretary of Syria's prohibited Communist party, Riad al-Turk has been in prison without charge or trial since he was arrested by agents of the Syrian security forces on October 28, 1980. In mid-March, news reached Amnesty International that he had slipped into a coma as a result of renal failure and had been transferred to Tishrin Hospital in Damascus. He remained there about 15 days before he was returned to the Military Interrogation Branch, the detention center where he has been held incommunicado since his arrest. Riad al-Turk is reported to have been severely tortured throughout his detention and frequently denied proper medical care for ailments. Please write to the President of Syria asking for the immediate and unconditional release of this man who has now been held more than ten years without ever being charged with a crime: *President Hafez al-Assad, Presidential Palace, Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic.*

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AN EYE FOR AN EYE

And a truth for a truth: Capital punishment is the U.S.'s No. 1 human-rights abuse.

Article by Celia Farber and Staci Bonner.

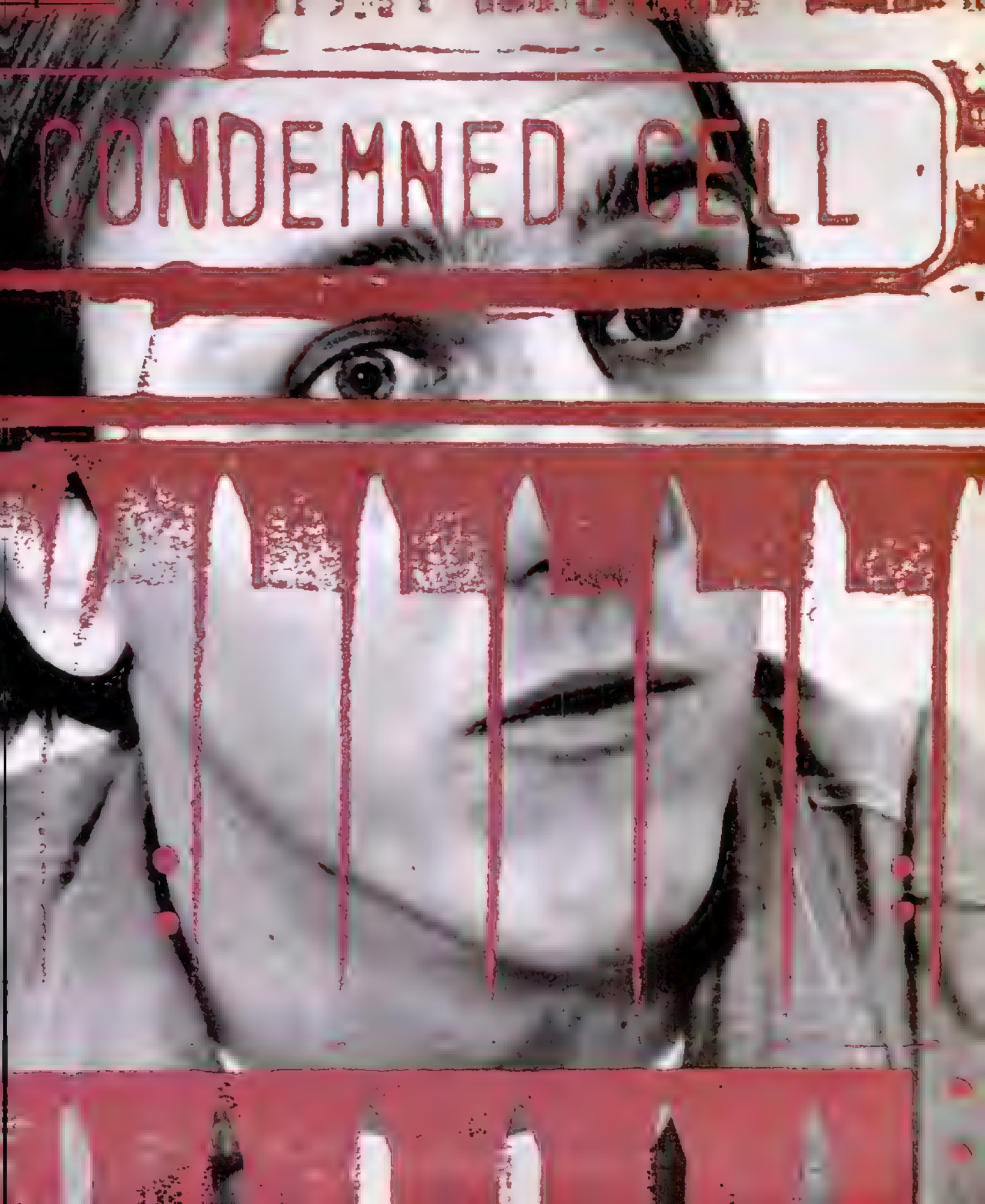
Imagine a young man, slightly cross-eyed, sitting in a windowless room at 3:00 A.M., waiting. He hears two prison guards coming down the corridor toward his cell, but he is only hazily aware of what they have come for. He is, at best, three IQ points away from clinical retardation.

The guards enter the room in silence, carrying shaving cream and a set of razors. They pull a chair into the middle of the room and ask him to sit. With precise, methodical movements, they wrap a sheet around his shoulders and proceed to shave his head, his eyebrows, and his calves. They then put conducting gel onto his head and begin to massage it in. They massage the gel in for *half an hour*. Then they get to work on his legs. Finally he asks them, "Why do you have to do this?" One of them answers, "It's to make it easier, Terry."

At 4:05 A.M. the guards put a diaper on him and dress him in jeans and a clean, white T-shirt. Then they walk him over to the execution chamber of the building that is quite simply called the Death House. The lingering smell of burnt flesh has permeated the rooms in there, despite the air fresheners. The execution team have to soak their clothes for days afterward; some put Vaseline in their nostrils for protection against the smell.

Facing a panel of witnesses seated behind a Plexiglas window, he is strapped tightly into the electric chair. A sponge soaked in salt water is placed under the metal cap, assuring a snug fit and a good passageway for the two thousand volts of live current that

James Terry Roach was executed by electrocution on January 10, 1986.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Five out of 36 states with the death penalty still use the gas chamber

will pass through him in three solid jolts. He does not know that his heart, internal organs, and possibly his eyeballs will explode from the current. A tight mask is placed over his face to hold his eyeballs in their sockets and to spare the witnesses the grisly sight. Only his nose is exposed from the mask. Once he is strapped down, he sits rigid, still, awaiting the blast. The witnesses can see that he is alive only by the Adam's apple bobbing up and down in his throat as he swallows nervously. After what must seem to him like an eternity, but is probably no more than 30 seconds, the electricity races through him. His body arches, spasms, and then stiffens. A cloud of smoke rises from his head. Beneath the covering, large blisters swell across his scalp and legs—his skin blackens in patches, as if baked.

There is a silence as the smoke spirals toward the ceiling, and the stench wafts out to the room where the witnesses sit staring. Air-sickness bags are made available but are unused. The body must cool for at least three minutes before the officials can touch it. Immediately after an electrocution, the body is so hot that it can blister the hands of a person who touches it. Finally a doctor walks up to him, unbuttons his shirt, and listens, absurdly enough, for a heartbeat. Detecting none, he turns to the warden and says, "This man has expired."

THE MAN IS JAMES Terry Roach, who pleaded guilty to the murder, sexual assault, and kidnapping of two teenagers in 1977. (His case and others are documented in Amnesty International's *A Punishment in Search of a Crime: Americans Speak Out Against the Death Penalty*, Avon.) Roach's lawyer, David Bruck, says Terry "lost out in the death penalty lottery." Bruck took over his case just a month before the January 10, 1986, execution, and insists there were mitigating factors. "He was mentally impaired, and clearly the sidekick of an older, more experienced criminal. There was evidence that Terry suffered from Huntington's disease, but that was never presented to the judge. His court-appointed lawyer just pled him guilty and let the judge sentence him." After the crime, Terry fled the scene in a cab, and asked to be taken to his father's house—some 120 miles away. He had no money to pay for the cab fare. He scurried into the house, and the cab driver came in after him. That's how he was arrested. Such was his ability to anticipate the consequences of his crime. He was 17.

"As often happens in situations like this," Bruck says, "the sentence depended less on what he did than on the social and political prominence of his victims' families and the poverty and obscurity of his own background."

Bruck was with Terry in the last five hours before his execution and witnessed the execution itself: "The thing I remembered most was the quickness of it all. It showed how easy it is to snuff out a life. It was like closing a drawer or blowing out a candle. When the electric chair

works as it's supposed to, that's what you remember, not the gruesomeness of it and the skin blistering, but how easily destroyed a human life is. That's not a message we should be conveying to our society."

Moving words, but there's more to the story. The two teenagers Terry killed were also snuffed out like nothing—like two candles blown out. This is the death penalty's mind-boggling crossroads, right here. How does a modern, civilized society deal with the primordial human desire for retribution? Where once upon a time, vengeance was a personal matter, we now have an elaborate judicial system that is meant to absorb our battles—our violence and anger—process it for years, measure it meticulously, and then portion out the punishment it deems appropriate. Huge, unwieldy, and complex as that judicial system is, it is doomed to fail at times, because it has to walk a line that will always be ambiguous: one between its individual citizens' rights and the self-preservation of society as a whole. When a society opts to execute its worst-sinning citizens, it reveals, rather like a bad parent, its own failure to cope.

On the other hand, the death penalty could also be seen as a form of social self-defense that is ultimately life-affirming, because it rids society of its most destructive elements. Cast in such a social Darwinist perspective, the death penalty can appear downright sensible.

As the United States continues its mad spiral into crime, violence, and social decay, the death penalty question becomes more and more difficult. It's too simplistic to simply point out that capital punishment is nothing but government-sanctioned murder—firstly, government-sanctioned murder is commonplace, and secondly, "murder" implies maliciousness on the part of the government and innocence on the part of the offender. It is a killing, certainly, and it is violent, and as such it is wrong. But what are the alternatives?

Many states now provide for life sentences without possibility of parole, or with a minimum of 25 to 40 years served before parole is considered. But doesn't lifetime imprisonment constitute a torture arguably more horrendous than death itself? And what if the killer slips through a legal loophole, gets back on the street, and kills again? Even the most liberal-minded among us, when faced with the brutal details of a murder, find ourselves wondering

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whether the death penalty isn't justified in some cases. We are of the perception that the death penalty is a necessary, if repugnant, system of justice, and that the legal process that precedes an execution is meticulous, consistent, and beyond debate or reproach. In fact, a close examination of the use of the death penalty reveals not so much a system of justice as a lottery.

Some 20,000 murders are committed in the United States each year, only 1,500 of which are eligible for the death penalty—first degree murders, or murder combined with a rape or robbery conviction. Only a handful of people are actually executed each year for murder. Many factors determine who gets executed and who doesn't and they go way beyond the severity of the crime: Financial status, quality of defense, political undercurrents, and geography are a few.

A few more basic facts: The United States is the only Western industrialized nation that still executes (with the exception of South Africa, which currently has a moratorium on executions). According to *Death Row, U.S.A.*, a publication of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund issued this past August, there are currently almost 2,500 prisoners on death row in the 36 death penalty states. About 50 percent are white, 40 percent black, and the remaining 10 percent from other ethnic minority groups. Twenty-three prisoners were executed last year, and ten to date this year, bringing the total to 153 in the U.S. since executions resumed in 1977, after a ten-year hiatus.

The most common methods of execution are electrocution, lethal injection (of poison), and asphyxiation (by gas). A few states still provide for execution by firing squad or hanging. The rate of executions is accelerating, and there are more prisoners on death row than ever before.

ONE OF THE MOST COMMON arguments for the death penalty is that it is a deterrent to violent crime. Numerous studies have shown this to be false—concluding that the death penalty certainly does not provide a unique deterrent to crime, any more than the threat of prison.

Another argument for capital punishment is that it saves taxpayers' money to execute murderers, rather than keep them alive indefinitely. Also not true. It costs much more today to execute a person than to imprison them for life, given the astronomical legal costs involved in cases of capital punishment. Numerous reports have confirmed this fact.

But the most chilling argument often made for the death penalty is that some people, who have committed unspeakably gruesome crimes, simply "do not deserve to live." Without attempting to plow through the inner mechanisms of that awesome existential question—who decides who has a right to live and who doesn't—let's put the spotlight on some of the tangibles: Many who have worked closely with the death penalty, particularly in the deep south, argue against it because they see it as a modern version of lynching. The picture they paint is of a lottery that is not random but quite fixed—and dictated by a racist agenda. You don't see it if you look at the race of the offenders on death row; the thing to look at is the race of the victim.

"People are not sentenced to death for committing the worst crime—they are sentenced to death for having the worst lawyer."

Stephen Bright, director of the Southern Center for Human Rights, says, "The death penalty will be imposed for a black or white person killing a white person, or for a black person killing usually several black persons, but you absolutely *never* see it for a white person killing a black person."

"Most of the crime that takes place in this country is intraracial—black on black and white on white," says Bright. "But the cases that excite people are the interracial crimes, particularly black on white. You see the death penalty imposed in an extraordinarily high number of those cases, often by all-white juries."

Alvin Moore, a black man, was executed in Louisiana in 1987. He was tried, convicted, and sentenced to death by an all-white jury for the rape and murder of a white woman.

A year before he was arrested, his cousin, a young woman named Virginia Smith, was murdered in the very same jurisdiction. Three white

men picked her up, made her perform oral sex on them, robbed her, and then stabbed her to death. The men got life imprisonment. "The criminal justice system is the one institution in this country that has been the least affected by the civil rights movement," says Bright. "All the elected prosecutors in Georgia, Alabama, and most of the southern states are white. The typical death penalty case that I see down here is a black person on trial, while all the other participants in the trial are white—the judge, the prosecutor, the entire jury."

There are, of course, people who insist the use of the death penalty is not biased. "The charge that the death penalty is racially applied is simply not correct," argues Michael J. Bowers, the attorney general of Georgia. "The Supreme Court has reviewed volumes of statistical information and concluded that the death penalty does not discriminate on the basis of race. I can't guarantee that there isn't some racial animus in some cases, but to the best of my ability I try to filter that out.

"All I can tell you is that if a white person were to murder a black person in Georgia and the evidence would indicate what is necessary for capital punishment, namely a murder and a so-called aggravating circumstance, I would do everything in my power, and I think all the district attorneys in this state would, to see that the death penalty was applied. After that it would be up to the jury."

"Black people," Bright counters, "are the victims of about 65 percent of the murders that take place in Georgia and Alabama and yet the death penalty is reserved almost exclusively for cases in which the victims are white. Eighty to 85 percent of the death penalty cases are white victim cases. Of the fourteen people executed under Georgia's new death penalty law, ten were black. And all but one of those cases involved white victims."

If the system is racist, it is kept that way in insidious—and technically illegal—manners: One way is by purging a jury of its black members, under false pretenses. A prosecutor has access to 12 so called "peremptory challenges" per case, which means 12 chances to throw a person off the jury, without explaining the reasons. Prior to the 1977 murder trial of Andrew Lee Jones in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, a black juror was told to go home. When the prosecutor was challenged as to why, he

continued on page 114

"As a child I got a sense of many things from rock'n'roll—a sense of life, a sense of fun, a sense of human possibility, a sense of sex. But I think that what I got most of all from the records that first inspired me was a sense of freedom. One of the greatest challenges of adulthood is to hold on to your idealism after you lose your innocence."

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living in the real world

Peter Gabriel's first career was an art-rock masquerade. But now he's grown up into the Real World, which is also the name of his ambitious studio complex and record label. JACK HEALEY and BOB GUCCIONE, JR. talk to world music's most popular proponent.

COMING OUT ONSTAGE IN SAN FRANCISCO'S COW PALACE AT THE BEGINNING OF Amnesty International's 1986 Conspiracy of Hope Tour, and hearing Peter Gabriel performing the song "Biko" live, I felt his amazing power for the first time.

An incredible energy poured out of him and into me and everyone gathered at that site, and we felt it right down to our toes. At that moment, I knew we had it. I knew we'd gotten that message out—the ringing message that, in spite of torture and death, the courage of the human spirit and its legacy remained. With Sonny Venkatrathnam—a former prisoner of conscience who had done time on South Africa's notorious Robben Island, I went backstage. We were still crying when we came up to Peter and hugged him and thanked him. Peter, too, crying from the emotion of the moment, was asking, "Was I okay?"

Two years later, Peter joined us again for Amnesty's worldwide Human Rights Now! Music Tour, and once more in 1990 for the concert in Chile's National Stadium. Throughout the many years I have known him, Peter Gabriel has been there for Amnesty; he brings to us an extraordinary decency and a commitment to a better world.

He recently took time off from a week of recording and performing with a

CHRIS CARROLL

group of international musicians who had gathered at Peter's studio in Bath, England, to participate in the 1991 World of Music, Arts and Dance (WOMAD) Festival, to talk to me and Bob Guccione, Jr., about life, music, and freedom of expression.

Healey: Where did the song "Biko" come from?

Gabriel: Well, there's two parts to that: The music was the soundtrack for an African film called *Dingaka*, which wasn't a great film, but I had heard this stuff on a Dutch radio station and that got me curious. I traced it down in a small shop in London. So I started listening to some African rhythms. That was an influence. I was trying to get something very simple with a natural groove that would be a good backdrop for emotion. The lyrics were really publicity around Biko's arrest. I thought, as did many other people, that it would be sufficient to protect him. So there was some sort of shock when news of his death came out. And I had qualms about whether it was right for me to get into political lyrics or not. I had quite a few conversations with friends because I was coming from a white, middle-class English background, and I didn't know whether I would be taken seriously. But in the end, I felt strongly about what I was writing, and the song felt as if it had real feeling, so I felt confident to go with it. It was an important turning point in my musical and lyrical direction.

Healey: I heard that some of the black artists in America feel that rock'n'roll has been ripped off from them. You hear that sort of thing wrongly raised—I think—with Paul Simon. How do you approach that?

Gabriel: For an artist not to work with the things that excite him or her most is a ridiculous piece of censorship. It's a continuously evolving thing and the flow is always going in all directions. The idea that musical culture is pure is absurd to me. All artists, all peoples, gravitate and grab the things that excite them.

Healey: Tell me about bringing your first band together.

Gabriel: Genesis was a school group, and we used to practice in our parents' houses.

Healey: Which artists were on your mind then, and who is on your mind now?

Gabriel: At that time there were two areas, soul and blues music, which were happening in England. Otis Redding was my hero. I saw him in the Ram Jam Club in Brixton, and to this day it is still my favorite show. The warmth of the man was just overwhelming, and it was just fantastic. It was that and Stax and Atlantic stuff, and then there were the Beatles, the Stones, the Yardbirds, the Kinks, the Who.

Healey: Were you guys any good yourselves?

Gabriel: I remember trying to break down barriers with style. Now music is sort of a revolution that is taking place without anyone really noticing. But at that time it was compartmentalized. When we went and tried to get a deal, we would play something folky—acoustic guitars, twelve-strings, melodic. And then we would play something progressive and electric and the record company guys would say, We can sign an act like Paul Anka or we can sign a rock group, but we don't have anyone who tries to do both. We would put in influences from hymns, soul music, and pop music. It was a big mixing thing. The focus was always on songwriting before musicianship. The musicianship we didn't master until later on. Phil was a master drummer, and he helped to raise the level of musicianship in the band. In terms of writing there were some good melodic ideas. The lyrics were pretty naive and self-conscious, but there was a good feeling in some of it.

Healey: And who influences you now?

Gabriel: I listen to a lot of stuff from around the world and that would be up there. I always go blank when people ask me that.

Guccione: How about rap? Does that interest you?

Gabriel: Sometimes, if there is a sort of picture there, a bit of landscaping with the sound—Tone-Lōc's "Wild Thing" had that. I like that. But a lot of it goes right past me. One of the great things about pop music is that you don't have to be good to be successful or to get a shot. Will power comes first and talent can come later. In a way, some musicians hate that, but I think it's actually very healthy.

And it is happening more so in terms of technology which gets people making music without years of drudgery and practice and skill. Music or visual arts are really just languages and shouldn't exclude anyone. Anyone can speak them. It really upsets me sometimes when people think, "I don't have talent to do music, or to make pictures, or to work with video." Whatever it is, you don't need talent. You only have to have something to express, some curiosity. And to go along with that, all you need is confidence.

Healey: When fame came, what you inevitably wanted in music, was that helpful? Is that hard to handle?

Gabriel: I think it's difficult. You don't become a performer unless you want attention. It took me awhile to sort of accept that. That applies to any profession—if you become a general or anyone that gets a lot of attention, you're somebody that needs it. In a way, for me, the work part of my life—I feel quite good about it and I know what I'm doing. It's much harder work for me sorting out my personal life, I think.

Healey: And things put pressure on that?

"When we go to some of these countries and they say these songs really made a difference to our lives you think, Well, maybe it was good that I ignored the critics."

Gabriel: It puts on some pressure, but I don't feel that's a particular problem. For me, Genesis came very slowly and there were a fair number of people who didn't like us or take us seriously. It wasn't the sort of thing where you go from obscurity to being the be-all and end-all.

Healey: You handled it better than most of the stars on the tour. Are you a loner in some sense?

Gabriel: In some sense I am.

Healey: I watched you on the plane on our DC-10; you sat in front of me and most of the time you worked. You were friendly with everybody, but you seemed basically a loner.

Gabriel: There are times when I really feel a part of things. Sometimes I only get that way with music. I guess that's why I love working with African musicians. In some ways it's the antithesis of what I am, and so I'm attracted to it and I feel more free. That's one of the reasons I bought the place in Senegal. When we were there we'd just go around to

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different clubs, or be invited to jam, and I would be able to do that without any sense of self-consciousness, which is great. And basically here or in L.A. or New York I wouldn't be able to do that and feel comfortable.

Healey: Why is that?

Gabriel: There's an openness there, and people just get on with the job and make you feel good.

Healey: In Atlanta, at the Conspiracy of Hope jam, they had to drag you up to do the jam in the restaurant that night.

Gabriel: I was a reluctant jammer.

Guccione: Is that partly because in America there is such a worship of celebrity?

Gabriel: Yeah, I'd say that that's definitely true. Other cultures are as interested in who's famous as everyone else. But once you get caught up in the music and are dancing—not that I score in that department—there's a much higher emphasis on being cool in our society. There, it's just more on feeling. I should be able to get through all that over here, but I don't always.

Healey: What emotion works best for you when you're free of constraints?

Gabriel: Joy, excitement, passion. I always found sad music easier to get into, unless there was a really great group. That's one of the great things about African music, that it's genuinely happy; there's so much in Western society which is false happiness—it's like a plastic smile. The only thing that bugs me more than false happiness is false solemnity—commercial grief. That's something I'd like to see change in our society—the way people handle death, so that it becomes eliminated, the way the Victorians eliminated sex.

Healey: Do you have some sense of celebration about your world music, a sense of a brighter future because of more consciousness?

Gabriel: As discussed on the human rights tour, the consensus is that if a power base can be found for that sort of constituency, you can slowly push idealism a few inches further through the belt of youth around the world. I'm quite optimistic, though I think there are still enormous problems. When you start judging and excluding people you allow room for a lot of atrocities, and I'm sure there is that part of us which is the torturer or the executioner and we have to be able to see that in ourselves before we can work to try and change things.

Healey: I remember on the world tour you'd be all excited about landing in a third world country, and most of the other artists were scared to death. Are you excited about what's happening this week?

Gabriel: Yes, this is a dream come true because we tried to set up Real World as a vehicle for things like this to happen, people from different cultures, arts, technology and so on, and it's really the first time we've had people here from Russia, China, Africa and Japan. This group of artists have traveled around together each year for the last nine years and this sense of community has built up. This is the first time we've tried to get this sense of improvisation and jamming which happens on those festival tours into the studio. I think sometimes we're very privileged, like when we were in Chile talking with Jan Jara. Her husband was doing the same thing we were doing, singing and writing songs, but he lost his life for it. And there we were making a very good living and being applauded in the same place those people were killed. That was a really powerful sense of how lucky we are and of the potential that music has. Like Woody Guthrie having written on his guitar "This machine kills fascists." These things bubbling on the surface are closest to people's hearts.

Guccione: Do you think that there's been progress in the last twenty-five years ?

Gabriel: Jack is probably a better person to answer that, but I think in terms of consciousness, I sense that some of the idealism is beginning to return now that was there in the '60s, with smaller visibility and volume. But perhaps this generation of young people can take it further than we did because they are better informed and have a better sense of reality, but there are amazingly strong forces working against that all the time. There's an interesting thing Brian Eno told me about a study done by *Stern* magazine in Germany. As I understand it, they went around asking people from countries all over the world two questions: 1) Are you happy? and 2) Are you optimistic about the future? And the two countries that scored highest on both accounts were Northern Ireland and South Africa. One possible thought on why that might be was that they had an identifiable enemy and a struggle that might have an end. And in this country some people say, Well, the war years were the best years of my life. I don't know if that's a positive thing or not in the sense that perhaps if you do have an enemy with a human face, life has a meaning and a purpose. And it doesn't without that.

Healey: For young people like your two daughters, what kind of world would you want them to inherit?

Gabriel: One with a different sense of justice and a sense of possibility and hope, where people have a sense of their own power. Because I think that it's hard to realize that one person does make an enormous difference, can make an enormous difference. And that's the lesson that I would most like them to learn.

Healey: How does someone like you handle "Biko," which has gotten so famous? If you ever did another story about human rights, would they write you off as cause-oriented and paint you into a corner?

Gabriel: Well, I think it actually goes with the job, but when we tour and go to some of these countries and they say these songs really made a difference to our lives you think, Well, maybe it was good that I ignored the critics.

Healey: I remember the night that Max Sisulu won the Carter Award and he was on *Nightline* with Ted Koppel. And Koppel said, Did this musical tour embarrass you? And he came back and said, No, this music has supported our struggle. These are our people, they are us and we are them, and it was amazing for an ANC leader to say that so bluntly and so clearly. I think the media tends to write off the fact that the world owes a debt to the Peter Gabriels, and the Stings, and all the musicians that make a difference.

Gabriel: It's a difficult thing, 'cause in a sense we're given a lot of attention. On the other hand you get the cynical reaction of people seeing us as benefit whores just dying to do our stuff for any cause. But then when you're on the other end and this Kurdish guy is saying our people are dying, how come you do things for Africa and South America and no one gives a shit about us? You can't say I'm busy with my record and put the phone down. Once you're on the circuit, you get the phone calls.

Healey: Tell us about the theme park.

Gabriel: It's a project I've been working on for about fifteen years, so now we're in danger of having to actually do it. We have a site that's been offered to us in Barcelona.

Healey: Sometimes the worst thing that can happen is to realize your own fantasies.

Gabriel: There's a lot of work that goes with any dream. We've got a whole team of artists, architects, and psychologists, and the idea is to create a place in the same way you have independent films, independent record companies. No one's really come up with an alternative theme park, it's still pretty much middle of the road. Nothing against scary rides, but I think that there's a lot more than you can do with it, where you put people in spaces, experiences, rides, whether it's with a virtual reality or different environments or

"I had qualms about whether it was right for me to get into political lyrics or not. I was coming from a white, middle-class English background and I didn't know whether I would be taken seriously."

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where people can interact with rides. There are a lot of logistical problems to overcome, because a lot of these things work better one to one. And economically you can't do it unless you move a lot of people through to pay for it. But there are a lot of very exciting ideas, and it's been taking up a certain amount of my time now.

Healey: Where is your music headed now?

Gabriel: I don't know. There's still all this influence from all over the place. There's some Senegalese rhythms and then there's some old-fashioned songs—and there's a Russian choir on one track.

Guccione: Is the song about Russia?

Gabriel: No, the song is called "Come Talk to Me." We were recording them in the studio and it was a very emotional, gut thing.

Healey: I remember talking to Sting, and Peter came by. And Sting said, Here comes Peter, he's always creative, he pisses me off.

Gabriel: Yeah, but he can do it in about a tenth of the time I can, and that pisses me off.

Guccione: We all agree about the positive aspects of music. What about the negative aspects, like the theory that rap and heavy metal induce people to kill themselves? What do you think about that?

Gabriel: It's a very difficult issue; I don't like some of the attitudes expressed, but I would probably defend their right to be expressed.

Guccione: If music can have a positive effect, then why can't it go the other way and have a negative effect?

Gabriel: Anything that has a positive power can have a negative power, and it's just how you use it. In a way, I think it's right to open up the negative parts of ourselves; not to unleash on other people but just to get air. Things you lock away in the cellar tend to grow strong. Things you let out in the daylight dissipate.

Guccione: Do you think that music can still change the world? Does music still have the same vitality as when you started out?

Gabriel: There was a great sense of breakthrough in the '60s, because it was the first time in the history of the world that youth power identified itself. There have been some changes, and I do believe that it still has that potential to link people up and to focus their energies for better or worse.

Guccione: What do you feel about music that is used for commercials, the whole idea of sponsorship of rock? Does that diminish the culture as a whole?

Gabriel: It does, because music has always been seen as a free agent, and for me the power of it was that it didn't really belong to anyone, the record companies or big business, or to the people who own most of the rest of the world, and some of that may have been naive but there was still that sense. At the same time I looked at video screens for the tour, and I spoke with the Oriental manufacturer who sponsored the thing; and then in the third world a lot of the concerts can only happen with alcohol and tobacco—but I will not take alcohol or tobacco sponsorship. I actually do drink—I don't have anything against drinking—but there are large numbers of deaths through drunk driving. To bring another generation on to a set of addictions that people are trying to get off of is a process that I don't want any part of. Peer-group pressure is enormously strong when you're a teenager, and I don't want to be a salesman for it. There is a potential danger when the music, which is a vehicle that can free people's dreams, becomes a certain commercial machine. So I wouldn't say to people don't do it. I would just say the thing you have is very precious, don't fuck with it.

"Music has always been seen as a free agent, and for me the power of it was that it didn't really belong to anyone, the record companies or big business, or to the people who own most of the rest of the world."

Guccione: That's beautifully put. I think that the danger is once a musician accepts a corporate sponsorship then he no longer has the right to call himself an outlaw.

Gabriel: I'm not really there to judge people, and sponsorship isn't wrong in all cases, but people need to be extremely careful how they go about it and what parts of themselves they are selling. Alcohol and tobacco is where I draw the line. I say to every promoter that I don't do alcohol or tobacco, and of course a lot of the promoters of halls have been realizing that a lot of sponsorship money has been going to the artists and they say, We want that. So they sell their season to a beer company. The signs are up there, even though you have put it clearly in your contract. And you get there, and there they are; they've already sold it. You get in these absurd arguments in these situations.

Guccione: What has been your most emotional work?

Gabriel: I would definitely say the stuff I've done with Jack has been among the most powerful work I've ever done. And I think all the artists felt that. There is a sense of what the music means to those people. It's an instrument for—a focus for—social change or human rights, just to feel included.

Guccione: Our last question is: Where do you hope to be? You have been doing this now, what, twenty, twenty-five years? You are a successful recording artist. Where do you hope to be in the next twenty-five years?

Gabriel: I want to keep my hand in some of the projects Jack is up to. Still, there is the sense that rock music belongs to teenagers and shouldn't be performed by elder gentlemen, but I think that as long as there is interesting stuff coming out. I think that I'm improving my work and I think quite a few artists are, so—

Guccione: Who do you think is improving?

Gabriel: Uh, I have to think.

Healey: Springsteen?

Gabriel: Yeah.

Guccione: What about Bob Dylan?

Gabriel: Yeah, Dylan sticks out. The *No Mercy* record, I thought, was a great record. And some people were talking about Joni Mitchell the other day, too.

Healey: Say, "Sting!" (*Laughter all around.*)

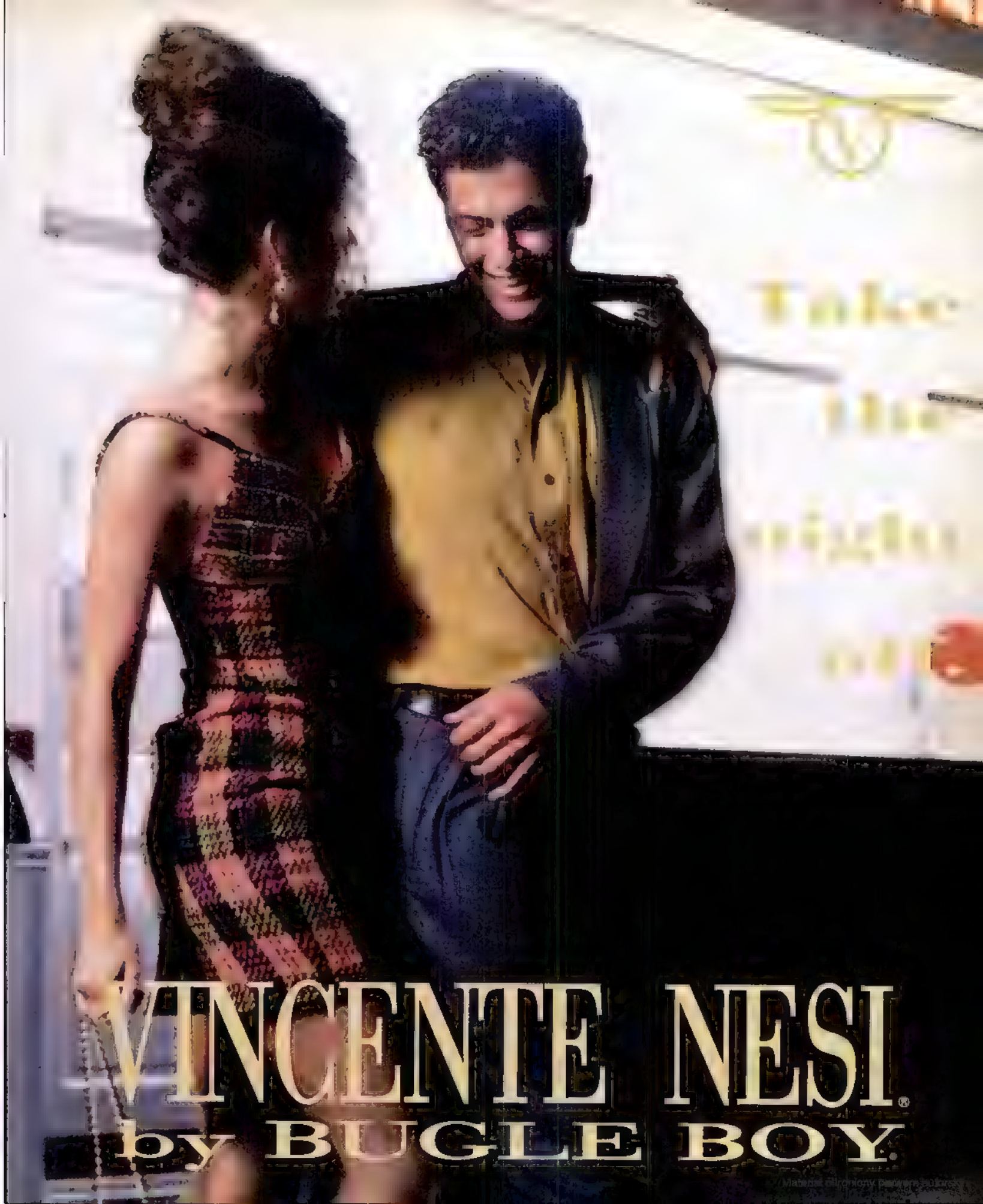
Gabriel: I like Sting's stuff. I think he is a very good writer.

Guccione: He's going to be upset that we ranked him with older artists!

Healey: No, he's turning forty. He's got to admit that.

"As an attorney and as a Latin-American, I know how important Amnesty International has been in terms of saving lives in Latin America and throughout the world, and also how important it is that people become aware that the problems that we confront on this earth are common and the solution to these problems should be, and will be, also a common one."

RUBEN BLADES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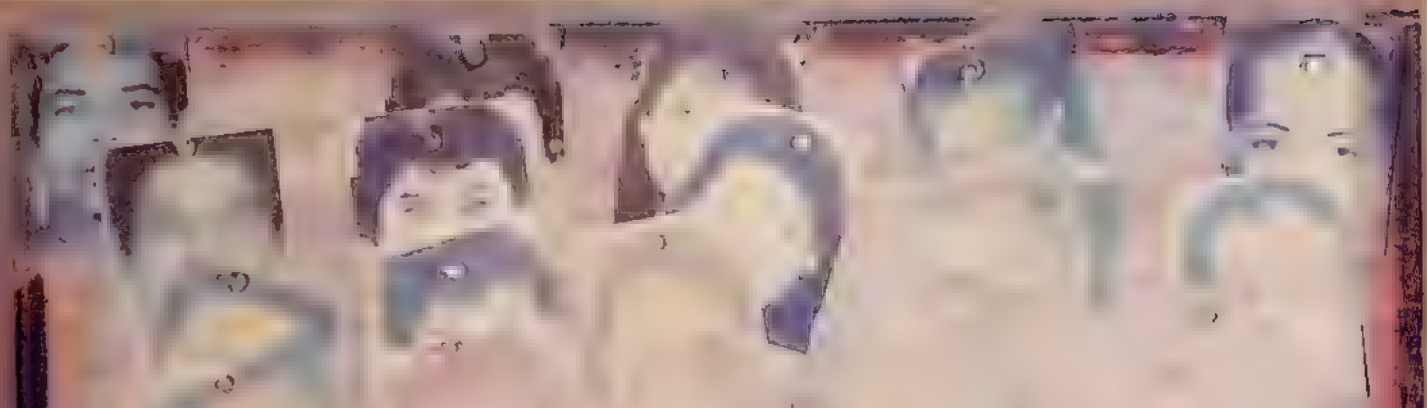


THEY SHOOT CHILDREN, DON'T THEY?

As executive director of Covenant House's Latin America Programs, BRUCE HARRIS had his life repeatedly threatened for protesting the Guatemalan national police's systematic abuse of street children. Here, Harris reports from Guatemala City on what is—and what isn't—being done.

It's five in the morning in the cold, deserted streets of Guatemala City. The warmth of the rising sun warns the 5,000 street children that a new day is coming. Another day full of abuse, exploitation, and hunger.

The ubiquitous stench of death wafts through the alleyways of Zone Three as the mutilated and tortured body of yet another street boy is found. This child's head has been beaten to a pulp and, for good measure, his eyes have been gouged out. Who could do such a thing?

Other street children soon raise the alarm at Casa Alianza's Legal Aid Office for Street Children and the investigation begins. Casa Alianza, an affiliate of the New York–based Covenant House, is the only private agency in Guatemala that is sticking its neck out to protect street children.

I am so, so tired of burying dead children. In the past year we have buried 14 tortured and mutilated bodies. And we have found out who can do such a thing—the national police.

On March 4, 1990 four uniformed policemen kicked to death 13 year-old Nahamán Carmona López in downtown Guatemala City. The fatal beating occurred when Nahamán, part of a group of street children caught sniffing glue, resisted having his glue poured over his head by police, which is the usual practice.

Nahamán was a kid whom I knew, who had hugged me and trusted us. And there he was. Dead. Six broken ribs, a ruptured liver, and bruises over 70 percent of his body. Nahamán's death was to send shock waves around the world.

Casa Alianza sued the four policemen and, after more than a year of pressure and for only the second time in the history of Guatemala, the four policemen were sentenced to 15 years in prison.

The euphoria was soon to cease. In August 1991 the Appeals Court annulled the prison sentence—an all too common tactic by a corrupt system.

In the meantime the national police continue to beat, rape, and murder the helpless street children—products and victims of a society that does not want to face their responsibility. Besides, it's easier to kill them.

There are millions of street children in the Americas. This daunting problem affects all major cities from Tierra del Fuego in Chile to the Northwest Territories of Canada. Death squads in Brazil have murdered more than 450 children this year alone.

Casa Alianza is currently suing 55 national policemen in approximately 39 law suits for murder and torture of street children in Guatemala.

It is because of Nahamán, Toby, Capitol, Canario, and the more than dozen other street children who met the same fate, that we keep on pushing our demand: Stop killing children. That is all we ask. Nothing more. And certainly nothing less.

For more information on how you can help the Guatemalan street children, write to: Covenant House Latin America, 346 West 17th Street, New York, NY 10011

Art by Hans Neleman.

JAZZ MESSENGER

JACK HEALEY talks with trumpeter Wynton Marsalis about the good works of good jazz, America's classical music.

WYNTON MARSALIS IS A PHENOMENON. A great jazz musician steeped in classical training, a young man with not just a horn but a clear and articulated view of the world. Last year he played as part of Amnesty International's concert in the National Stadium in Santiago, Chile. He played in the same place where thousands of Chileans were detained, tortured, or killed in the brutal aftermath of the military coup in 1973.

And there, in a new Chile with a democratically elected government, Amnesty International held a concert—a musical celebration of a freedom that had not been experienced for 17 years. And there Wynton Marsalis blew his horn, and blew away the thousands gathered.

We stayed in a nearby hotel, and each of the three nights we were there Wynton stayed up into the wee hours jamming with his fine jazz band that had come down to Chile with him. One night I joined them—at three in the morning—and found him, his band, and a wonderful group of Chilean musicians playing a cool, moody jazz that seemed to hang in the atmosphere. There he was, this great American musician, playing with unknown local musicians and together speaking a language that has no words—communicating deeply and movingly. I'll never forget that scene.

Nearly a year later I found Wynton—still playing his horn—at a New York recording studio, and asked him a few questions.

Jack Healey: What were you thinking when you came down to play for Amnesty, in Chile, in the stadium?

Wynton Marsalis: At first I thought, "You have to go to a show where people will come and hear rock music, and they're not going to want to hear what we're playing because it won't be that loud. It won't be the beat they are familiar with." But that was a very moving thing for me—how people identified that blues and started singing a song that they were singing at soccer games in 1963. Just the fact that they could identify the form of the blues, the sound of it, and everybody could sing that song against the sound of the blues. It was a very moving thing.

Healey: It not only was moving—it rocked the place.

Marsalis: To think that here was the blues we were playing. That was an amazing thing. It was one of the most unique experiences in all my years of playing music. I'll never forget that.

Healey: How about in general? How do you feel as someone walking down the street and looking at things?

Marsalis: I feel that we have a very naive political philosophy, in terms of human rights. . . .In order for a democracy to work, those who have the most sometimes have to give up more. It's like playing in a jazz band. You can't stand up and solo all night yourself, even if you're the best soloist. You have to play the background sometimes, and let someone else develop and play. That's what I learned playing with Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers.

Healey: How about this music? You have to be really clever to keep your integrity in this thing. I mean even as an outsider—as I am, just doing concerts for human rights—it seems you've got to try to protect your integrity.

Marsalis: Yeah, it's hard to stay out there and act with integrity, because you don't get accolades for keeping your integrity. You get insulted and cut down. The recording industry itself is not based on integrity or musicianship or any of that. They're trying to make some money basically exploiting the sexual naïveté of teenagers. And they'll do that however they can.

Healey: So you fight . . .

Marsalis: To maintain your integrity. You can't want to have control over other people. Once you start wanting other things—publicity, popularity, money—that's the beginning of the end. And boy, those things are tempting. Sometimes you feel jealousy for other people who have these things. You might know more about music than they know, but you have to realize that the music industry is not about music. It's not about the level of musicianship. You just have to accept that you're just a small part of what goes on in the world. So you develop your musicianship, and you develop your skills in terms of dealing with people.

Healey: And who do you think is really playing a good note?

Marsalis: People like the Modern Jazz Quartet; all the great orchestras—the London Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra. There are a lot of great musicians who are out there right now playing. I don't even like to name some, because there's so many.

Healey: Once I was lucky enough to spend some time with Charles Mingus at Dick Gregory's house, and I asked him how did he listen to the music. And he said that he could just hear orchestras. Why didn't I hear an orchestra? Do you hear that early on? Where does that jazz thing come from? It's so complicated.

Marsalis: It's not really complicated, because there's the blues and the beat in the blues and the soul of it. But the thing that makes it so powerful is the combination of the inner link and the soul. And this is something that has been separated in a lot of music so that the teenagers can be exploited into believing the inner link is not a part of life, that it fights with emotion. But it doesn't fight with emotion. That's what separates man from a dog or a cat or an elephant. We have minds, and we have parts and feelings. And they're both important, and they both should be cultivated. I was introduced to John Coltrane's music when I was twelve and thirteen. I used to go to jazz concerts with my dad then, but I didn't like that music. It was too crazy, people playing everything. I didn't know what they were playing. But then I put this Coltrane record on, and it was—just the sound, the dignity of the music and the intellect of it. And the soul of it. It was sexy, it was spiritual, it was intellectual. It was aristocratic, it was down to earth. It seemed like it had everything in it. And I could hear so much in it. It made me feel a certain way.

Photographs by Jesse Frohman

Riding on a blue note: Wynton Marsalis articulating his world vision.

Healey: Peter Gabriel told me about a song he did that was sung in China, Senegal, and—I think—Wales. There were no translators, but they still communicated, composed together. Do you have some sense that world music is being grasped as a wider reflection of music now?

Marsalis: To me, when you put a backbeat on something it becomes African-American music. I don't care what you put on top of it. It could be a pentatonic scale, it could be some chants from some region of the world, it could be some Chinese music. I listen to the folk music of many different peoples' traditions. And each tradition has a series of grooves and beats that go with its music.

So to really deal with all music is a very serious proposition. Musicians traditionally incorporate aspects of another style of music into their style. Bach did that. Even though he was German, he would write music to sound like the French music of the time, and there were some concertos he wrote that people thought Vivaldi, an Italian, wrote. That was the world as he knew it. Now the world that we know is much greater than the world of that time because we have the airplane and telecommunications, but unfortunately we're not producing musicians like Bach.

Now, I'm in favor of anything that brings people together. And if people come together under this sound, that's fine. But I feel that most of the music that I've heard that comes under the heading of world music is not sophisticated enough to be actual world music. It's just a backbeat with the sound of some other people's music on top of it. And to me, that makes it African-American music. Because the African-American culture is a world culture. There are some Chinese Negroes who are called black. Some Cubans, Brazilians, combined with French and English and German and Japanese, it's a hybrid mulatto race of people. And I can't question what goes on in the world, because I'm trying to figure out about jazz music.

I feel the blues has something to do with music, folk music, that I've heard all over the world. It can be *gagaku* music from Japan—sounds like the blues. It can be the somber music of Brazil. All the different styles, I can hear blues in all that. There's this Chinese flute music I heard dealing with the minor third and the blues proposition. The organization of the improvisation was like the traditional African drum ensemble.

So to me world music is like what Duke Ellington was doing at the end of his life, like the Fauré suite and the African-Eurasian eclipse, and "Midnight in Paris"—the music of all French tunes done in the jazz style. The *Nutcracker Suite* in Tchaikovsky's music, this is world music. Not to disrespect this other music.

Healey: Sure, I understand.

Marsalis: I'm just trying to clarify what I already feel about. Which is not that it's a bad thing to have happen. I think it's good if you can get people of different cultures together. But in terms of an enduring aesthetic statement—well, that's a different proposition.

Healey: When you talk about a real aesthetic contribution, do you feel that jazz as you hear it in the United States now is moving in a good direction? Are there modern-day Duke Ellingtons?

Marsalis: Well you don't produce people like Duke Ellington just by talking about it. I know there's nobody like him out there now. But we have to get more serious about music and human feeling in music. You can't produce people like Duke Ellington on top of one beat. It takes a willfulness to be sophisticated and to address the actual feeling of living in the world, complexity of being alive.

And the simplicity of it. You have to have an assembled romantic conception and a sexual conception, sensual conception. It has to be adult music. The world deals with adult sensibilities. Children have a certain innocence and beauty, but the greatest achievements are adult achievements. The adult spectrum of the world is broader. In terms of producing Duke Ellington in the jazz scene, I feel that we're doing better than we were ten or fifteen years ago. But we still have a lot of jazz music to address that has not been addressed over the last twenty or thirty years.... To really have an impact, you have to be well versed in your craft, and there has to be a belief in that craft, and a belief in that art. There can't be always a desire to sell the art out just to make some money. But I think that Duke Ellington has laid out a marvelous foundation, much like the foundation that Bach laid out for European music.

Healey: What do you practice? How do you say to yourself, Wynton's got to improve in that area?

Marsalis: There are different things to improve and there are musical things—hearing, more precisely. Having quicker reflexes so whatever you hear you can just play automatically on your own. Playing with a more beautiful tone, bigger sound, swinging harder, playing with rhythms, with a more groove-oriented rhythm. Better communication with the other musicians that you play with so that you can really get a group dialogue going. And then there are the things—the human things—that are not music, but come through the music. Like developing greater humility. Developing greater understanding.

Healey: So there's a whole hell of a lot going on in that, in your jazz path, and it's swinging and moving. It's a democracy.

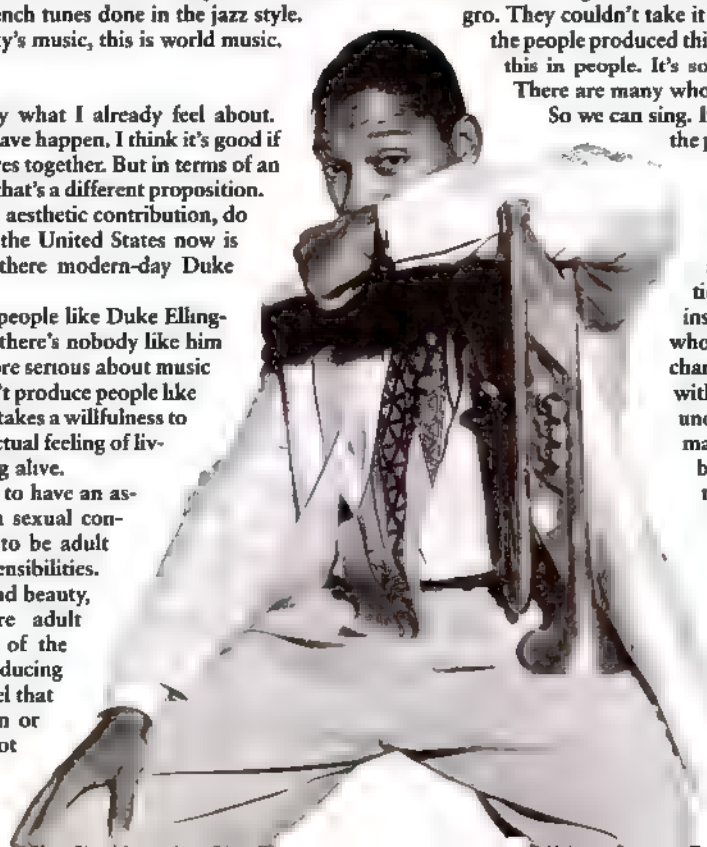
Marsalis: Because everyone is playing, and you're trying to make them sound good, and they're trying to make you sound good, and you're inventing what you're playing at the moment that you're playing it. So there's a lot going on. It's an actual representation of what goes on. It's a musical representation of what goes on in a working democracy. You have to want to play with other people to play jazz music. You can't just play your part. 'Cause your part is their part.

Healey: A lot of times governments won't let in messages of freedom and decency and spirituality. Do you get a sense there's some imperative a musician has, or do you just feel that they do their music?

Marsalis: Well, what I'm going to say is unpopular. I think a lot of what goes on today in terms of music is just based on getting on TV and making some money. They'll say they're for human rights and all that, but if you were concerned for human rights, the first things you would address are human rights in your own country. The striving for dignity and freedom lies within the hearts of all people, no government can take that from people. The United States government couldn't take it from the United States Negro. They couldn't take it from the slaves that came over here. And the people produced this in themselves. The Creator has produced this in people. It's something that exists in the human spirit. There are many who have the will.

So we can sing. It can be a bunch of rock songs about "let the people go free" and all of that, but the governments don't take that seriously. They'll take it seriously through Amnesty International. You can man a thousand people in a stadium, because that's a political activity. That's a political action. But to really force change, you have to inspire a mass of the populace. And those who are in charge never want to see things changed, because their money is being messed with. And a lot of these things are spiritual understandings. A belief in the oneness of man. A spiritual thing. Spirituality's always been given black eyes at different times. But the entire history of humanity is one assembled motion. There may be people who believe, "Oh, there never was any good old days. Thirty years ago I'd have to sit on the back of the bus behind some signs and be subject to all kinds of whatever." I caught the tail end of it. So, we lose the glorious past? But the things that were glorious could be the future. And it would be glorious. It's just a matter of when.

"In order for a democracy to work, those who have the most sometimes have to give up more."



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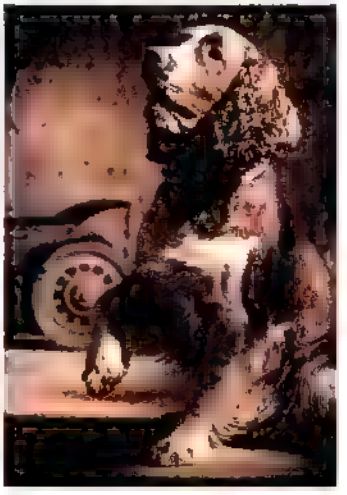

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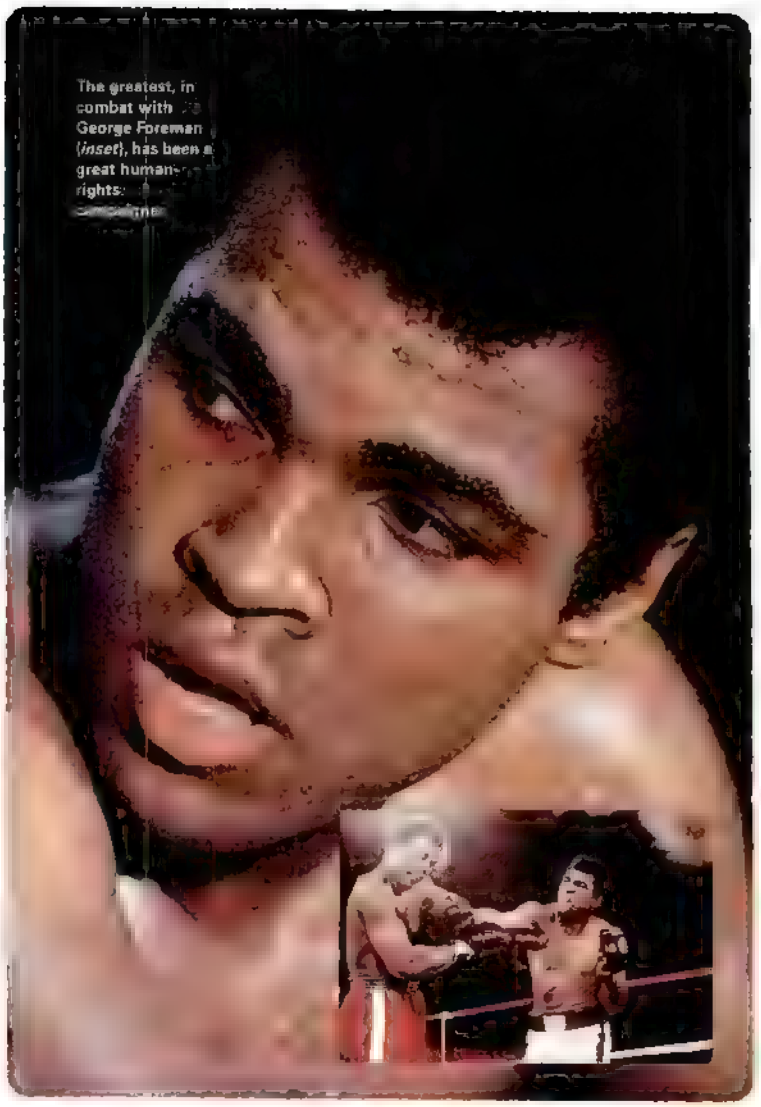

In 1967, Muhammad Ali paid the price for his conscience when he was stripped of his heavyweight title and sentenced to prison for refusing to fight in the Vietnam War. JACK HEALEY reminisces about the human-rights champ.

MUHAMMAD ALI IS ONE OF MY HEROES. I HAD WANTED TO INTERVIEW HIM for this issue of SPIN, but the logistical forces were against me.

Then again, maybe they weren't. Since Muhammad and I couldn't be in the same place at the same time, I get to tell you why he's a guiding spirit to me and to the rights movement.

I had orders from Dick Gregory back in 1976 to go talk to Muhammad Ali. The nationwide Run for World Hunger that Dick and I were working on at the time needed a dose of heavyweight energy.

So there I was, in a kind of waiting room in Muhammad's Washington, D.C., hotel suite. It was about noon, the day of his fight with Jimmy Young. The room was filled with impatient people who wanted pieces of his time. I waited around for a while; then Muhammad appeared and showed me into an inner room.

I found myself among a teacher and six children from a local school for the mentally impaired. Muhammad had apparently asked the teacher for the name and telephone number of the person who was No. 1 in each kid's life.

Muhammad took each kid, one by one, and held him or her on his lap. Then he telephoned the kid's best friend, parent, or whomever the teacher had designated, and said to the person on the other end of the line, "This is Muhammad Ali, the number one fighter in the world. I'm sitting with..."—then he'd say who it was—"and I'd just like you to know that fact."

Muhammad running this amazing show seemed perfectly natural. He was relaxed. I thought, This man knows how to pull human dignity from cold shadows like sunlight.

When Muhammad later asked me exactly what we wanted done for the Hunger Run, I told him that it would be real helpful if he would say a few words after the fight about world hunger.

The fight went 15 rounds, and he won. When it was over, with all the cameras and microphones focused on him, he said that he was supporting the Run for World Hunger and so should everyone else. He said exactly what it was I asked him to, after 15 grueling rounds, when it would've been remarkable enough to remember where he was. A short time later, he flew to the site in Arizona that the run had reached, and again he conjured up magnificent support for starving peoples of the world.

That's how I came to know Muhammad Ali. Over the years, he just kept getting better. He profoundly understands what's just and what's unjust in the world. He knows that if you don't do anything about injustice, you become a diminished person in a diminished world.

At the East Coast finale of Amnesty International U.S.A.'s Conspiracy of Hope rock tour, Muhammad came out on the Giants Stadium stage with Bono, Sting, Peter Gabriel, and many other artists. For an afternoon that stage became his ring for fighting dictators, torturers, paramilitary death squads, and the like.

His fight for human rights throughout the world continues. It's probably gone to 1,500, or maybe 15,000 rounds by now. My money's on Muhammad Ali, and my heart's with him, too.

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CHEROKEE NATION

Singer JACKSON BROWNE talks to Wilma Mankiller, the first woman to become chief of the Cherokees, about the cultural survival of Native Americans.

Jackson Browne: What are the major issues confronting the Cherokee?

Wilma Mankiller: Overall, we have to encourage our people to look within our own history and culture and value system—our own communities and our families—for solutions to our problems. For example, in environmental issues, there are no magic people out there who are going to solve our environmental problems. There's only us. We've got to get people to see that if we have problems in education, health care, or any kinds of community problems, the solution lies within our own communities, our own value systems, and—in some cases—in our traditional culture. Under that overall umbrella is the issue of making sure we maintain the right to self-

SCOTT MAYO

governance, and the government-to-government relationship with the United States. Then under that follows the programs for jobs, health care, and education.

Browne: At the heart of this is the right to self-determination. It's an often-stated American ideal. How does it work with the policy of the U.S. government toward Indian people? How is it in conflict?

Mankiller: There's one federal law called the Indian Self-Determination Act. And there's another law, a legislative act that allows the tribes to take more control of resources. Their view of self-determination is totally different from our view. Real self-determination is not only making decisions about small things, but we make decisions about our lives and resources, have our own economic base, and need to be able to articulate and then go out and do whatever it is we say we need to do for our people. The federal law's idea of self-determination is that the U.S. government still wants to hold our hands and tell us what we can do and what we can't do.

Browne: When we talk about human rights we usually see images of torture and imprisonment, and very often those people that are in prison are there because of their work to bring about social change, and for opposing governments not responsive to people's needs. Are there Native American political prisoners?

Mankiller: Absolutely. I think that the problem is with the term *political prisoners.*

Browne: Prisoners of conscience, people who have been charged with crimes that release them from their political activity?

Mankiller: Certainly I think there are Native people, particularly in Central and South America, who are not only imprisoned but are dead because of their political views and political activism. Absolutely.

Browne: What about in the U.S.?

Mankiller: I think there are some in the U.S. but fewer than there are in Central and South America. There are a lot of people who I think are also—depending on the way you define what a political prisoner is—in prison because they don't understand the legal system, or they just don't trust it and they say, "Why should I get a lawyer, and why should I even fight this when that's not our judicial system. And it's never been fair to us, and why should I even think that we're going to get justice?"

Browne: How does contemporary rock and pop culture affect Cherokee youth?

Mankiller: I like the stuff the young people are listening to today. I really like rap music. I lived in a predominantly black housing project for about five years during my youth, in San Francisco. So to me, as an outsider who's lived in that culture a little bit, it's a nice reflection of a culture that wouldn't be heard otherwise. I find that our own young people are always listening to that kind of music, which has nothing to do with their lives at all—it's mostly an urban experience instead of a rural experience. I think it's a way of allowing our youth to have a glimpse into urban culture.

"We see some of the biggest violations of human rights in this country—in the attempt to suppress or totally eradicate Native American religion, ceremonies, and languages."

Our young people are like most other young people: They like rock'n'roll music. I wish there were more people, like yourself and Kris Kristofferson and Tracy Chapman, who would use the immense popularity and public forum they have to raise the consciousness of people about issues like the environment and Native issues and Native rights and human rights, because so many young people listen to music and they don't listen to politicians.

We don't have a national leadership standing up and saying those things. We used to listen to people like John and Robert Kennedy, and Martin Luther King, Jr. People like that would talk about where we should be in our relationships with women and civil rights and so many other issues. I don't find them anymore. I think that many people in rock'n'roll are providing public statements and leadership on issues that people want to hear about.

Browne: Do you feel that the current U.S. educational system adequately addresses the history and contributions of Native Americans?

Mankiller: They absolutely do not. If I had another life I would spend that life trying to get people to understand the enormous contributions of Native people to the Americas. Sometimes I think the United States has been slow to recognize the contributions of Native Americans, because it simply does not want to deal with the truth about the history of America. No one wants to hear about the Sand Creek Massacre, the Trail of Tears, the incredible brutality toward California Indians or the Wounded Knee Massacre. They don't want to hear about the democracies that existed on this continent when there were still aristocracies in Europe. They don't want to know that sexism was introduced to the Cherokees by Europeans. They don't want to know that governments existed on this continent long before a United States Constitution was developed. They want us to be invisible so they can hang onto their myths about the brave frontier families.

Browne: What forms does racism take?

Mankiller: It takes many different forms. I don't think we see as much overt racism today as when my father was my age but I think that it's always simmering right beneath the surface. There is still a lot of racism toward Native people who are in leadership positions outside their communities. About every month or so we see anti-Indian editorials or comments in some newspapers.

Browne: What plans do you have for the protection and development of the indigenous culture in this country?

Mankiller: I think our biggest job is to protect indigenous culture. We see some of the biggest violations of human rights in this country—in the attempt to suppress or totally eradicate Native religion, Native ceremonies, and, in the boarding school situation, Native languages. We have just launched a whole set of initiatives to teach the Cherokee language using computer technology, because even in the most rural schools children work with computers. We bought a software program

of the Cherokee written language, and we hope to be able to adapt that in some way to teach reading and writing of the Cherokee languages to those who speak Cherokee. And to teach Cherokee to the people who don't already know it.

I also think the Cherokee ceremonial practices are very important. I always try to mention to people who think that I am the postmodern Indian that I use a traditional Indian medicine man, and that medicine people and traditional healing practices existed long before Harvard Medical School. Our people had a way of healing ourselves, and were very interdependent. I connect with people from other tribes to see what they are doing and replicate it.

Browne: How can your culture survive and continue in the onslaught of American culture and all its forms and changes. Or, as the tribe becomes a modern economic entity, how do you preserve traditional values?

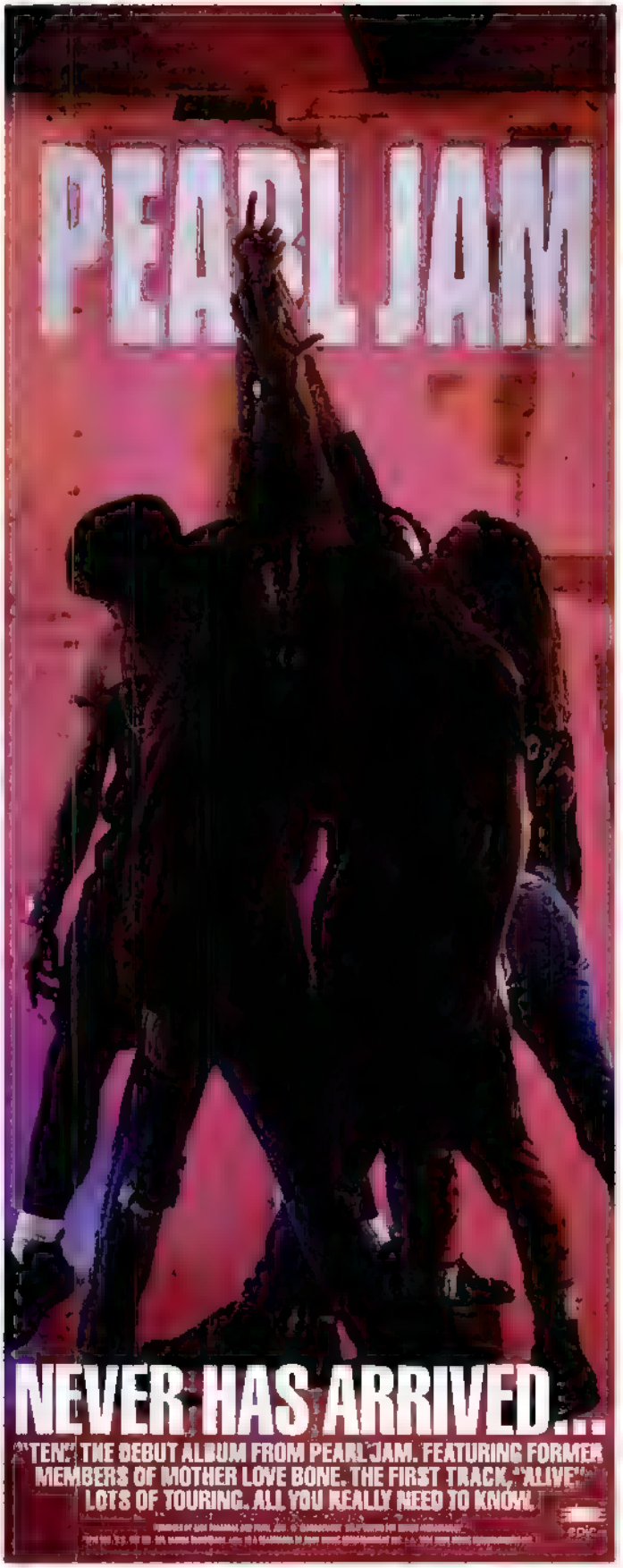
Mankiller: It's very difficult. Extremely difficult. And I think that you either figure out a way to do that or you don't survive. In my father's generation there's a general sense of having only two options. One is that you didn't interact with the larger society at all and remained a traditional Cherokee. In fact, one of my uncles thought you were totally lost if you went to school past the eighth grade because you became enculturated. The other option is that in order to make it in the world you had to give your heritage up completely. There was no middle point. You were either here or you were there.

What we have been trying to do—probably longer than any other tribe because we had early European contact—is to get people to see that being Cherokee is having a set of values that you can take with you wherever you go. And it is the value system that is the most important aspect of retaining our culture. How you dress or how you look or whether you wear the appropriate attire to traditional ceremonies has less to do with it than retaining a value system. So that's where we are. I think there are others who would argue strongly for other views on this issue but my view is that you can celebrate strongly who you are; you can take a set of values no matter where you go and what you do.

That doesn't mean it's easy. It doesn't mean that you don't run into conflicts. It doesn't mean that you won't end up in situations where you even have to compromise values. But it can be done—if you have a commitment.

"When Amnesty began, the subject of human rights didn't even come up between governments. Now, partly because of the work of Amnesty, it's really impossible for governments to discuss their agendas with each other without having to discuss human rights and their violations, and the facts of torture, detainment, no trials, et cetera."

JOAN BAEZ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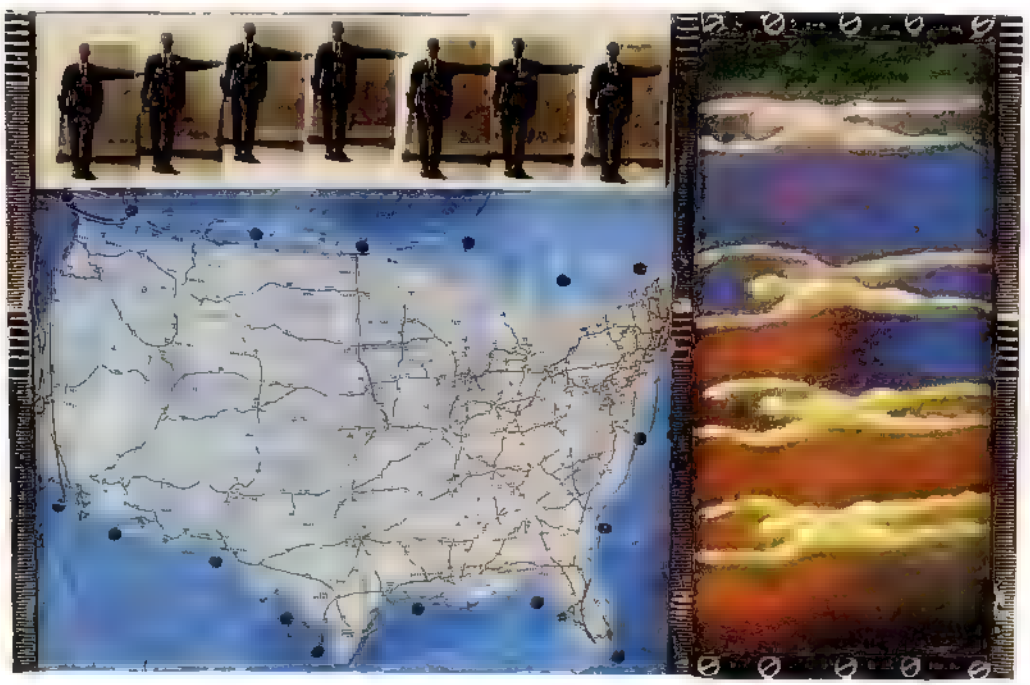
AIDS

WORDS FROM THE FRONT

The U.S. government has incited international outrage by restricting HIV positive immigrants from entering the country. CELIA FARBER reports.

THE UNITED STATES HAS A BAD ATTITUDE ABOUT AIDS. RONALD REAGAN, arguably, started it by waiting until the sixth year of his presidency and of the epidemic itself, before even uttering the word *AIDS* in a public speech. In that same speech, he also set the tone for what was to become the U.S. government's distinctly and uniquely punitive AIDS ethos: Blame. Restrict. Penalize. Turn your back.

AIDS came at an inopportune time. It was a new disease loaded with the worst terrors of the freshly elected right-wing government and the core of its constituents: anal sex, homosexuality, intravenous drug use—simply unutterable terms. Television's first-ever mention of the words "anal sex" has been pinpointed—years after the words held critical, if not life-saving potential, in the context of AIDS. Rather than do what an ideal government would do—launch a massive, clearly worded safe-sex educational campaign, our government chose to stick its head in the sand as if it thought AIDS would go away. While other governments were carrying out door-to-door educational campaigns complete with explicit condom instructions, the United States was mumbling vaguely about AIDS being a result of "behavior." In 1987, Congress actually passed an amendment that withheld any federal support for HIV prevention information which in any way spoke frankly or supportively of same-sex sexual conduct.



George Bush carried on the see-if-I-care tradition superbly. In 1986 Reagan became the first head of state who failed to attend the International AIDS Conference held in his country; George Bush, in 1990, became the second. Next year, there won't even be a conference for Bush to miss; it is being boycotted by the international AIDS community.

Now more than ever, United States AIDS policy is the focus of international outrage, ridicule, and astonishment. The anger that led to the boycott of the 1992 Eighth International AIDS Conference scheduled to be held in Boston was sparked by the U.S. government's harsh HIV immigration policy, which demands mandatory HIV testing of all immigrants. Those who test positive are refused entry into the country. Those who already live in the U.S. may be deported, even if they've been residents for years.

On the surface, this appears to be a simple medical issue, but when all the facts and figures are stacked up, a hidden agenda becomes apparent, as is so often the case with AIDS. Never before in modern history has a disease brought such a frontal collision and meshing of politics and medicine.

"Typically, we don't have discriminatory policies like this, because the United States is a country that benefits from immigration," says Mike Isbell of Lambda Legal Defense Fund, a gay rights organization. "The basis for this policy is clear—it is to punish people with HIV infection."

But *should* HIV-infected people be allowed in? Surely it's every country's right to protect its own citizens first in the face of a crisis like this? If it were a truly a question of protection, yes, but in this case it isn't.

In 1891, the first law was passed excluding people with "a loathsome or contagious disease" from entering the country. In 1961, the wording was changed to "dangerous and contagious disease," and the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) was authorized to make a list of those diseases. In 1970, PHS deleted 14 diseases from the list, leaving tuberculosis, leprosy, and several sexually transmitted diseases. In 1987, pressured by the White House, the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) added AIDS to the list, but noted that "AIDS is not spread by casual contact, which is the usual public concept of contagious," and that it only made the list because other sexually transmitted diseases remained on it. In July of 1987, the "Helms Amendment" was signed, adding HIV infection to the exclusion list. That same year, the world's largest HIV testing program was kicked off with over 4.5 million people seeking entrance or

EMILYA NAYMARK

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permanent residency from within the country, tested thus far. The annual cost of this effort is estimated around $4 million.

A significant change came in 1990. The CDC concluded that the only disease that needed to be on that list for health reasons was infectious tuberculosis, which is passed through the air, and proposed to the HHS (Department of Health and Human Services) secretary, Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, that all other diseases be deleted. Sullivan followed the CDC's recommendation. Following the law, the issue was published in the public register, allowing the public a period of response.

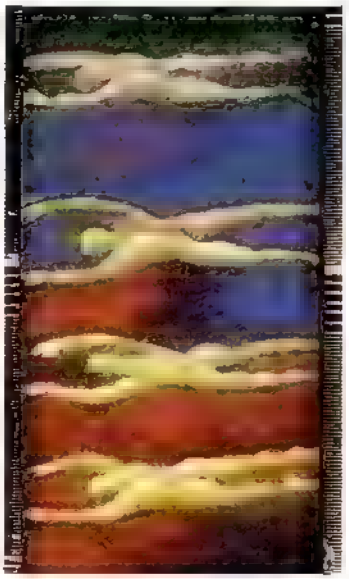
An avalanche of letters—approximately 40,000—came in from the far right, partially drummed up by a televangelist program that urged its viewers to protest. The letters achieved their desired effect: Secretary Sullivan retracted his decision to take HIV off the list, and at press time a final decision is still pending.

According to the HHS, the bulk of the letters expressed concern not that people would come into the country and spread HIV, but that if they got sick, they would lay additional burden on the health-care system.

"That argument made an impression on Dr. Sullivan," says John Gibbons, a deputy secretary at HHS. "The economic argument is a very valid one."

"That's all smoke and mirrors," counters Mike Isbell. "We're talking about excluding roughly four hundred people per year who are HIV-infected, according to the government's own estimates. The cost of testing hundreds of thousands of applicants for admission to this country every year is exorbitant. Even if you assume that every person with HIV infection becomes a public charge, the cost of providing care to this small number of people could never approach the yearly cost of testing every applicant for admission for HIV."

Researchers from Canada's McGill Center for Medicine Ethics and Law compared the cost of allowing people into Canada who were HIV positive to those who had coronary heart disease and concluded that coronary heart disease would cost the government far more. Congressman William Dannemeyer, as was reported in the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*, took the study and *left out* the part about coronary heart disease, left out that it was in *Canada*, and took the only information he could use, namely the figures on how much HIV care would cost the health-care system. Three days before the HIV restriction policy was set to be changed, Dannemeyer put this incomplete information into a letter to the Justice Department, urging them not to change the policy.



Now more than ever, United States AIDS policy is the focus of international outrage, ridicule, and astonishment.

THE BOYCOTT OF THE Eighth International AIDS Conference (which was to be sponsored by Harvard University) was declared by the world's AIDS organizations, physicians, and healthcare workers, who felt that the U.S. policy was punitive, irrational, and discriminatory. The boycotters pointed out that this policy is shared by countries like Libya, Cuba, Iraq, and South Africa and that until it is revoked, there will be no International AIDS Conference in the United States.

"Not true," says John Gibbons. "There are many countries that we have normal relations with that have the same policy. We want to make the point that this disease is not passed on by casual contact. It is passed on primarily because of one's behavior and people can eliminate the threat of the disease by what they do or don't do, and people can decide. It's not easy for me to say that, but it's true. The majority of people have gotten AIDS through sexual activity or drug use. It's not like cancer or heart disease. This isn't a conservative conspiracy like the activists are claiming. The government is looking at this issue from all sides."

In fact, besides the United States there is no democratic nation that shares this policy, only a region—the Bavarian Republic of Germany, which is known for unusually strict policies.

"The government can't suggest to us that every international AIDS advocate is completely wrong about this," says Mike Isbell. "Clearly the immigration policies in this country are far stricter than anywhere else in the world. Why else would there be a *boycott?*

"Look at the messages our government is sending out with this policy. First of all, that the threat of AIDS doesn't lie within our borders but comes from outside—from people of certain nationalities. That's total nonsense. HIV positivity is four times higher here than anywhere else in the world. Punitive policies like this create a climate of fear, discrimination, mistrust, and suspicion, and the end result is that people who are at risk of HIV infection go underground. They don't get tested,

continued on page 115

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MOVING IMAGES

Using film to vanquish human-rights abuses is a challenge in itself—tough critics and minimal funding discourage many. But the stories must be told. Here, two top-notch filmmakers tell us how it's done.

LIBERATORS: FIGHTING ON TWO FRONTS IN WORLD WAR II

Bill Miles and I are seated at the editing table, screening footage for our film *Liberators: Fighting on Two Fronts in World War II*. Already on a seven-day, 16-hour editing schedule, we're viewing a reel of archival footage that has just come in. Shot on location in Germany, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the United States, *Liberators* tells the story of the segregated African-American battalions who spearheaded Patton's Third Army and who helped to liberate the concentration camps at Buchenwald and Dachau.

Producing social documentaries takes a tough breed of filmmaker, the kind who can weather the financial difficulties that come with the territory. Bill and I are both veterans of the funding wars. Individually, our films have been well received; we've each won numerous awards. But once you finish one, you start all over again, from ground zero. People constantly ask how we can have the track record we do and still have to go through this nonsense to raise funds? But that's the way it is. Now that the cutbacks are cutouts, it's even harder. Every time we try to get a film funded by a foundation or corporation it seems to change the guidelines. For a long time public television was the only place these films could get aired. You'd go to a network and they'd screen a few minutes and tell you it's not for them. These guys are supposed to be the experts—in what field are they experts? They don't seem to be in touch with the communities that we represent. We could make 140 films for the budget of *Terminator II*.

The National Endowment for the Arts turned us down twice for a grant to make *Liberators*. Luckily, when I was at the Berlin Film Festival last year for the premiere of my film *Through the Wire*, WDR German Television signed on as a coproducing partner in *Liberators*. Channel Four, Great Britain, coproducer of *Through the Wire*, also agreed to participate. SBS Australian Television followed. To make this historical film about a completely American story, we had to go to Europe for funding. But to date, only a third of the film's budget has been raised, and of that, two-thirds comes from Europe. Happily, however, Suzanne DePasse, president of Gordy/DePasse Productions and former president of Motown, was willing to come on as our executive producer. This Hollywood show of support from someone who understands the situation of independent filmmakers gave us hope.

On June 26, 1991, Bill and I drove from Berlin to Weimar (formerly East Germany) with E.G. McConnell and Leonard "Smitty" Smith, two members of the 761st Tank Battalion, Holocaust survivor Ben Bender and his wife Sara, and our German-American film crew. We would spend two weeks filming on location at the site of the Buchenwald concentration camp.

Bender had sworn he would never return to the killing fields of Buchenwald but had changed his mind for the sake of the film. He and his brother had made a pact to meet at the camp's main gate if they were ever liberated. On April 10, 1945, the day before the 761st Tank Battalion crashed through the gates and liberated the camp, his brother was murdered by the SS. Forty-six years later Ben and his liberators were returning for the first time to the place of so much torture, sadness, degradation, and death.

Above, archive photograph from the documentary *Liberators; left*, on location at Buchenwald concentration camp.

Cinematographer Kevin Keating set up his camera near the infamous crematorium. He focused its 300-millimeter lens towards the main gate and began to shoot the film's opening scene. When we called action, Smitty and E.G., arm and arm with Ben, walked through the main gate toward the barren roll-call area where inmates were forced to stand for hours in the freezing wind, heads bowed, dressed only in flimsy prison garments. The three men surveyed the vast expanse of ashen rock.

Ben picked up a handful of ashes, explaining that in 1943 and 1944 there was a tremendous accumulation of ashes at the crematorium, so the camp general decided to spread ashes all over Buchenwald and the roads. On camera, Ben told

RIGHT COURTESY OF MILES FILM SERVICES LEFT SIMON CHAPUT

MOVING IMAGES

E.G. and Smitty, "I might be holding in my hand human lives. Molecules of human lives. Maybe a son, maybe a parent. It could be Pole, it could be Russian, it could be Hungarian, it could be from every nationality. When you came you gave the gift of life to 20,000 inmates. By saving the remnants you saved future generations, because from these embers new generations came. Doctors, sculptors, writers, people from all walks of life. You planted seeds for the future. And this is your biggest contribution." Alone in his sadness, Ben slowly made his way toward a barracks stone marker and placed roses on it in memory of his slain brother. Tears ran down his face.

We get letters and phone calls from people who ask, "Could you do our stories because nobody else seems to care?" The guys in the prisons, nobody wants to tell their story. Hollywood produces a film about Patton and doesn't even mention the 761st Tank Battalion. As filmmakers, the two of us refuse to deal with the fantasy world. We deal in reality—and that makes a difference. People two or three generations from now will thus know the real story. Making a film such as *Liberators* is like being on a train. And it's an express—we don't have time to make any local stops. If you want to get on, get on. But don't stop us, because we're coming through anyway.

NINA ROSENBLUM

Above and below, scenes from *Closet Land*; *right*, Radja Bharadwaj on the set with actor Alan Rickman.

CLOSET LAND

I've described *Closet Land*, my debut movie as writer and director, as the dark side of Alice in Wonderland. It's a Kafkaesque story about a woman who is arrested, interrogated, and tortured by an unnamed totalitarian state because her children's books are considered subversive. My own story of getting the film made has an Alice in Wonderland quality all its own.

Before having written *Closet Land*, I had graduated from film school and spent a few years trying to break into the film industry as a writer and director. I was told repeatedly that my work was too "offbeat" for Hollywood. That's the problem with wanting to be a filmmaker: You have to convince someone with money to back your vision.

Or do you? I started to read stories about how Robert Townsend had financed *Hollywood Shuffle* with $100,000 from credit cards. That's great, I thought, but how many struggling filmmakers *have* $100,000 in credit cards?

My husband and I, both recent graduates, didn't have much money, but we did start getting bombarded with opportunities to get credit cards. "Congratulations! You have been *preapproved* for a $1,000 line of credit!" We routinely sent these notices straight to the wastebasket—until the story for *Closet Land* came to me. Because the whole thing takes place in one room with only two characters, I knew it could be filmed for very little money. *Closet Land*, in addition to being a story that intrigued me, was something that maybe, just maybe, I could finance on my own.

We started to collect those preapproved credit cards. We figured that between our new credit cards and savings, we could scrape together $40,000. I started scrounging around to find the cheapest soundstage and equipment. I interviewed stage actors for the two roles.

The script for *Closet Land* began to get some attention: It won the Nicholls Fellowship from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 1989, and was selected for the Sundance Institute Screenwriting Lab in 1990. Meanwhile, almost as a lark, I started sending the script around to Hollywood producers, and to my shock a number of producers responded. I laid down my terms: I would direct the movie, with total creative control.

Most producers balked at my requirements. But Imagine Entertainment, known for such mainstream films as *Parenthood* and *Kindergarten Cop*, agreed to let me make the film on my terms.

And so I filmed *Closet Land* under conditions much different from those that I had planned. I now had a budget of $1.8 million. I got to use established movie actors, Alan Rickman and Madeleine Stowe, and a professional crew. To create the surreal, dreamlike quality of *Closet Land*'s single set, I had none other than Eiko Ishioka, the world-renowned designer from Japan. Philip Glass was musical consultant.

Since *Closet Land* flew in the face of so many rigidly held preconceptions, it never really had a chance. It came and went in the blink of an eye. The small advertising budget ran out just as the film was starting to develop good word of mouth. The critical response ranged from the sublime to the ridiculous to the downright racist. Some reviewers, like Kathleen Murphy of *Film Comment*, completely understood and appreciated the film. Many reviewers, however, were expecting a gritty, realistic "political" movie, which *Closet Land* was never meant to be. One reviewer complained that it was wrong to make the torture victim a woman, because most societies don't allow women enough freedom to become politically active. Maybe this critic should share his insight with Amnesty International before they waste any more time and effort on their current women's campaign. The campaign is designed to educate people about the particular problems faced by woman prisoners, who are frequently tortured and sexually abused even if they haven't had the chance to become "politically active."

One review sank to the level of racism, and it came from a surprising source: the self-consciously liberal *Village Voice*. Reviewer Amy Taubin noted snidely that the film would allow Hollywood honchos to feel good about themselves for "supporting an artistic woman of color." In one fell swoop, she dismissed my difficult battle to break through as mere tokenism. The truth is that down in the trenches, where I've been struggling these past years, my gender and color have never been anything but obstacles to getting my films made. People like Taubin—who probably believes, like many liberals, that she's too hip to be racist—set back the cause of "artistic women of color" by several years. If we're not allowed to succeed or fail on our own terms, if our achievements always run the risk of being dismissed as tokenism, then we'll never be taken seriously.

RADHA BHARADWAJ

RIGHT: STEVE SHAPIRO

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DREAMING AMERICA

NOTES OF A NEW JACK

BY SCOTT POULSON-BRYANT

BOYS TO MEN

Early in his career, Johnny Gill's big manly voice proved problematic. How do you market a 15-year-old who sings like he's 35?

UNLESS IT HAS AN AGGRESSIVE EXTRA B IN FRONT of it, *boy* is a word black men don't take too kindly to. One of those history-charged phenomena that Americans know so well, *boy* bespeaks a legacy of forced underachievement, thwarted goals, and misplaced history—or, simply, a presupposed "lack." In the '80s, however, *boy* was recaptured (sorta like, ahem, *nigga*), and found a new corporate life: Youth was truly hipness, hipness was truly blackness, so who better to set the standard for savage chicness than young black boys from the 'hood? Only, these boys were great pretenders; these days the boys from around the way can't be just boys. A new world order of inner-city chaos and suburban angst made them men before they were supposed to be—or at least they acted like it did.

New Edition cruised through the retro-'80s landscape by successfully aping the playground love stylings of the Jackson 5. Tightly choreographed and striking love-man poses with much junior high panache, they conjured up an unthreatening faux-Motown ideal for a generation of post-Gordy preteens and their parents alike. And since this was 1983, their ghetto authenticity wasn't all that important—they merely wanted to sing, make people happy, and get paid. Eventually the boys grew up. Voices changed, producers such as Jam and Lewis stepped in to lead them to the promised land of "adult" themes and designer menswear, and Bobby Brown was outta there, on his own. Johnny Gill stepped in, bringing a profound bass to the harmonizing swing. Still aching, it seemed, to grow up, New Edition disbanded for a while to pursue solo projects.

It's interesting to chart the progression of black pop boyhood to maturity in the New Edition splinterings. Bobby Brown was one of the first artists to capitalize on the new-jack-swinging dance pop that began to sweep clubs and radio stations alike. With his hair etched to within an inch of its trendy life, his body drenched in sexy sweat, and a head-mike virtuosity that made Janet and Paula seem like neophytes, Brown became an MTV dancing darling. His smash album *Don't Be Cruel* had a curious edge to it, however; no Michael Jackson hide-and-seek here. Bobby Brown mixed Prince's braggart leer with Billy Dee Williams's sexual coyness—viewed side by side, his videos hinted at cinematic love-god status.

Next came Johnny Gill's solo project. With the usual array of hot producers and writers, Gill came out of the box with a new-jack-swinger ("Rub You the Right Way"), and followed up with "My My My," already a quiet-storm classic, accessible to teens and their folks. Slouching through the instructional come-on ("Slip on your red dress . . . "), Gill ends up in Teddy Pendergrass territory, crooning and gyrating his dark-skinned behind with ever-increasing authority. Early in his career, Gill's big manly voice proved problematic. How do you market a 15-year-old who sings like he's 35? Watching Gill work the crowd at Madison Square Garden recently, it seemed as if he'd been set free by increased testosterone levels.

Bell Biv DeVoe's maturation arrived in the studly guise of hip hop. Just as anxious to grow up and out of the teenybop ranks, the group chose the controversial route. BBD talked trash over the most fluent and curvaceous new jack beats this side of Teddy Riley's Guy. Personality was the most important thing here: Finally the 'hood was cool, and what they said goes. From "Poison" to "Do Me" to "Thought It Was Me," the guys in BBD wanted you to know that they didn't just think about doing it, they did it. And well. So what if they didn't seem to *like* who they were doing it to that much? They were men now. Rap permeated the tracks; thus misogyny was quite okay.

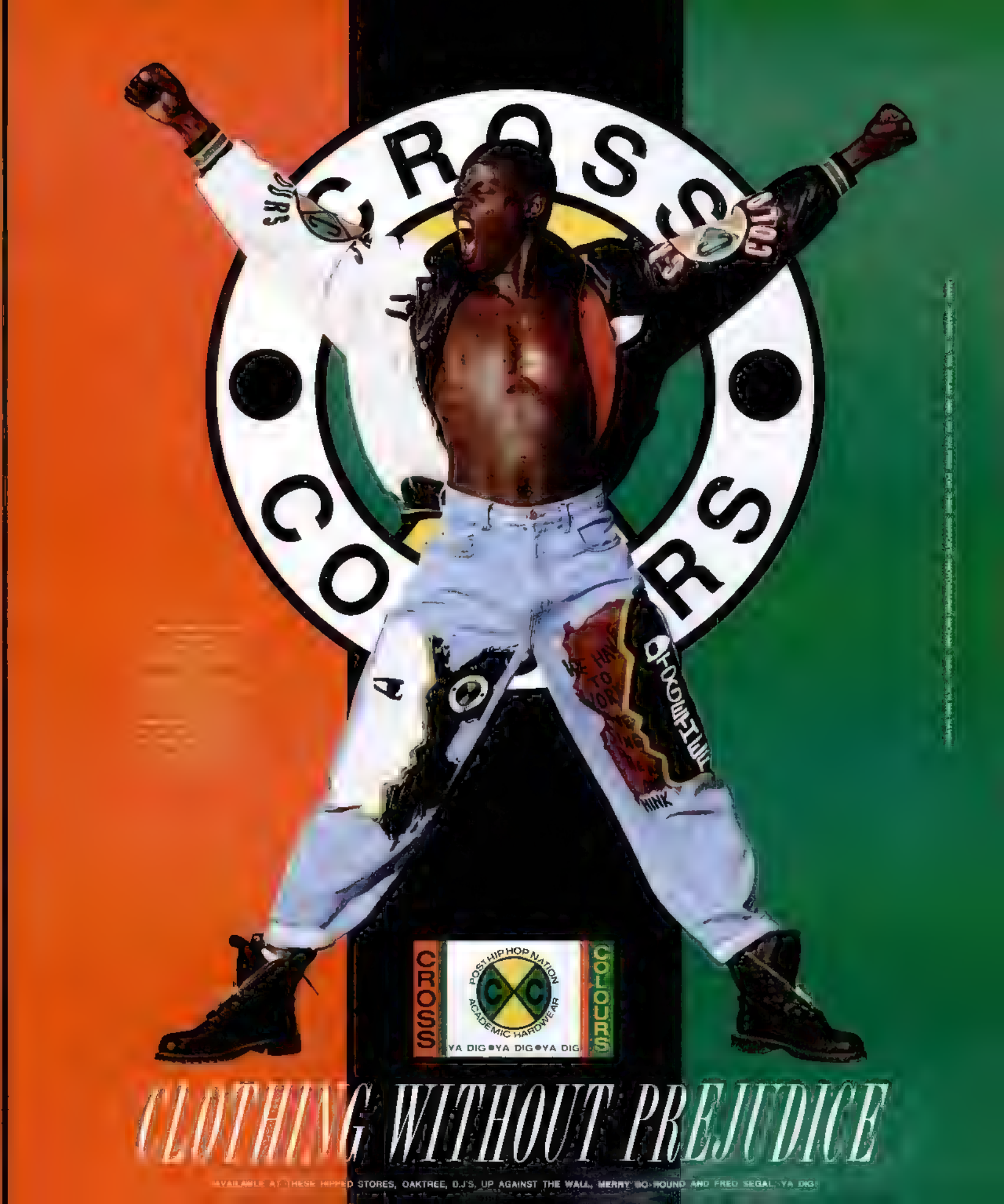
And then there was Ralph Tresvant. On the smooth tip. "You need a man with *sen-sa-tiv-i-ty* . . . / A man like me." Calm, cool, and collecting Marvin Gaye riffs like nobody's business, Tresvant rounded out the New Edition escapees with a minimum of arrogance, yet maximum effect. He didn't sweat like Johnny and Bobby, he didn't demand like BBD. His confidence seemed to derive from a karma quotient. He was simply there—which sometimes worked to his disadvantage; and since he couldn't hit notes like Johnny or rubber-leg like Bobby, his light-skinned suaveness would have to suffice.

But stabs at maturity aren't only in the grooves. The current crossover success story is Boyz II Men, a Motown act from Biv Entertainment, Michael Bivins's company. The group's album, *Cooleyhighharmony*, and single, "Motownphilly," are an offshoot of the BBD formula: Realness quotient (the lead single tells the story of their discovery in the 'hood) meets Fantasyland. Singing, writing, and arranging most of their own material, but with "creative direction" by producer-manager-writer Michael Bivins, Boyz II Men—Bass, Squirt, Slim, and Alex Vanderpool—manage to successfully evoke a world of independence as someone else's vision. The members of ABC (Another Bad Creation) are even younger than their Motownphilly brethren; their image—grade schoolers in B-boy drag—is a little scary to me. Their street-tuff enunciation and up-to-the-minute gear would probably scare Mother Goose away.

The final seconds of the "Motownphilly" video features a scrapbook photo album with snapshots of BBD, ABC, and Boyz II Men. It's stamped "The East Coast Family Album." Michael Bivins, like Berry Gordy, Jr., before him, thinks of his roster of acts as family. It's no accident that earlier in the video he's seen sitting on a toilet bowl, pants and drawers around his ankles, a newspaper on his lap, while the Boyz cavort around him. This boy's a man. Daddy's home.

ABC: leaders of the grade school.

ANASTASIA VASILAKIS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SPINS

REVIEWS EDITED BY JIM GREER

PLATTER DU JOUR

BILLY BRAGG

Don't Try This at Home

Elektra

When Billy Bragg debuted with *Life's a Riot With Spy Vs. Spy* in 1983, he seemed to be just another guy who could play a guitar and sing to beat the band. But the thing is that he didn't *have* a band to beat. The first couple of releases featured only Bragg, an ax, and an accent—not to mention plenty of axes (the other kind) to grind. Despite his obviously strong opinions about this and that, however, Bragg usually managed to avoid being overindulgent in his soapbox rhetoric, at least on vinyl.

Earlier this year after Bragg's appearance on American Public Radio's *Mountain Stage*, host Larry Groce quipped, "The views of Billy Bragg aren't necessarily those of *Mountain Stage*." Even though it was a joke, the audience booed. Sure, Bragg's a socialist or whatever, but who cares? He's a great songwriter. The Clash guys were political, too, but they were my favorite band when I was 14. I didn't know what the hell they were singing about half the time, but it sure sounded cool. But I've gotten off track. Oh yeah, the new record:

Don't Try This at Home features 16 new songs showcasing Bragg at his all-time best. He once again branches out musically to include other instruments besides his guitar, and this time it works better than ever, with a "band" feel that suits him well. Over half the songs have drums, and guests include Johnny Marr, Peter Buck, Michael Stipe, Kirsty MacColl, and a lot of people you've never heard of who play flugelhorns and violins and stuff.

Bragg further establishes himself here as an artist with a love of politics who understands the politics of love. You'd think the Gulf War and the ensuing patriotism plague would've pushed him over the edge and that he'd be a little preachy these days. Nope. Not at all. There are just a couple of war-related songs, and not a single mention of a union. Love and politics are blended impeccably (only Bragg could fit the lines, "A nuclear submarine sinks off the coast off Sweden / Headlines give me headaches when I read them," into a pop song called "Sexuality"), and the combination often becomes a delicious stew of emotional fascism

Like Elvis Costello, Bragg can be bitter without being whiny. And like Lloyd Cole he can be whiny without being pathetic. With this release he does both better than either of those guys did on their most recent works. The fast songs are good 'n' fast and the slow songs are good 'n' slow. (Just like it oughta be.) "You Woke Up My Neighbourhood" and "Mother of the Bride" are both bright countryish romps about lost love. The atmospheric, Moody Blues–ish "Cindy of a Thousand Lives" and the Spandau Ballet–style crooner "Wish You Were Her," force Bragg to stretch his vocal chords to new lengths (nearly sans accent). "Everywhere" finds him dead in a foxhole and "North Sea Bubble" features him drinking with Thomas Paine.

The performance here is so grand, you get the impression that Bragg realizes that politics aren't why people buy his records. And somehow that makes you listen to what he has to say all that much more. Maybe that's the whole point.

Mark Blackwell

AMY GUIP

This Guitar Kills Fascists

BY DANIEL FIDLER AND NANCY LEOPARDI

EVERYTHING YOU DO, consciously or not, has political ramifications—even the music you listen to. And while most bands shy away from factional pigeonholing, New York's **Nausea**, one of the Rotting Apple's premier aggronoise bands, prides itself in delivering and promoting politically aware music. Nausea scored big locally and in Europe with its first full-length LP, 1990's *Extinction* (Profane Existence), a rough-edged, fast-paced musical assault packed with sociopolitical lyrics. *Cybergod* (Allied), the band's new seven-inch, picks up where *Extinction* left off. Superior production brings a more user-friendly sound, while the lyrics address issues from media brainwashing to existential religion. Nausea's furious, guitar-oriented rock is something that definitely shouldn't be missed.

Not too far away, living in a squat near you, is New York's **Missing Foundation**, headed by the real Amerikkka's Most Wanted, Peter Missing. The band focuses on exposing governmental hypocrisy and conspiracy, and on its new LP, *Go Into Exile* (Missing Foundation), the Missing Foundation factory of musicians sets these ideas to a horrific din, combining live metallic percussion, thundering drums, nightmarish vocals and tolling bells. If *1984* ever needs an updated soundtrack, *Go Into Exile* should be a top pick.

Straight outta D.C. come the **Holy Rollers**, a heavy contributor to local political activist groups, involving itself in more local charity shows than paying ones. The Rollers' uplifting approach to life's everyday shortcomings is clear cut and in top-notch form on *Fabuley* (Dischord), the band's latest LP. The album is a competent combination of grungy Northwestern-type rock and tight, raw D.C. punk, but distinguishes itself from its musical counterparts by taking chances with vocal harmony and guitar experimentation. An inspiring pick-me-up from the city that brought us, yes, Fugazi.

Fresh from the Dutch East India vaults in Long Island come *Hardcore Holocaust* and *Hardcore Holocaust II*, two Peel Session samplers spotlighting some of the '90s' most promising hardcore, death metal, and thrash bands, with a few punk hopefuls tossed in between. No surprises here: **Prong**, **Extreme Noise Terror**, **Napalm Death**, and **Bolt Thrower** give top of the line, lashing performances. But if that's too hard to handle, savor a cool blast from the past with a **Gang of Four** Peel Session LP (Dutch East), a punk-pop connoisseur's wet dream. Tracks from 1979's *Entertainment!*, 1981's *Solid Gold*, and a few singles here and there provide a back to-basics look at what irresistibly funky political pop tunes are all about. One listen and you're hooked.

Nausea, *from left*: Roy Mayorga, Al Long, John Guzman, and Victor Dominicis.

NANCY LEOPARDI

For information on records or artists: Allied Records, (415) 541-9043, Dischord Records, (703) 351-7491; Dutch East India Trading, (516) 764-6200; Missing Foundation c/o Chris Eagan, 516 E. 12th St. #14, New York, NY 10009; Profane Existence, (612) 377-5269.

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○ = Stop it. Put that down. Go buy something to eat instead. You have to eat, too, you know.

PRINCE AND THE NEW POWER GENERATION

Diamonds and Pearls

Paisley Park/Warner Bros.

I fell off *Graffiti Bridge*. Just couldn't get across it, no matter how hard I tried. It was a wobbly *Bridge*; built on things borrowed (the best cuts featured Tevin Campbell and Mavis Staples on lead vocals) and things received (the other two good cuts were Prince-only jams—"Joy in Repetition" and "Thieves in the Temple"). It was a *Bridge* in need of serious repair. Maybe Prince was too busy writing and directing and acting and not busy enough composing.

Diamonds and Pearls, Prince's new LP with the New Power Generation, picks up the slack by being purely and unabashedly tuneful, reveling in its scattered attention to multileveled mingling of musical forms. The record is crammed to the rafters with *styles*: poppy glam-rock ("Cream"), rousing gospel ("Willing and Able"), hip hop ("Jughead"), smooth-talkin' jazz ("Strollin'"), and gliding retro-soul balladry ("Insatiable"). The cohesion is in the sheer forceful thrust of the band's musicianship—or as the liner notes read: "4 those of you who are wondering—a family is born and God bless us cuz we fonky."

And detailed. Earlier recordings with the Revolution suffered from oftentimes wayward mixes; it was hard to decipher the exact strengths of the players and how they contributed to the songs. Check out "Money Don't Matter 2 Night" here: Levi Seacer's smooth, loping rhythm guitar twangs away, leading Michael B.'s pop-jazz drum flourishes and the multitracked vocal slides into a colorful Steely Dan–ish groove. Or the funk attack of "Daddy Pop": Rosie Gaines's dazzlingly coordinated hoots, riffs and organ acrobatics force Prince into one of his finest vocal moments, a Sly Stone–ish grumble that positively purrs up next to the curvaceous, cut-and-mix beats.

Lyrically, Prince again reaches for relevancy, citing the Gulf War in a few cuts and adding rapped segments about greedy record-biz folk. But on *Diamonds and Pearls*, the words work best when they seem to come out of nowhere. "Cream"'s short guitar sling is introduced with "Look up in the air. It's your guitar." The chorus? "Cream . . . sh-boogie bop."

Not as committedly focused as Prince's best work (*Dirty Mind*, *Parade*, *Lovesexy*) or as gallantly erratic as his worst (*Controversy*, *Around the World in a Day*, *Graffiti Bridge*), *Diamonds and Pearls* is a sultry, groovy, inventively jittery jewel box of diverse nuggets. (*available mid-October*)

Scott Poulson-Bryant

PRIMAL SCREAM

Screamadelica

Sire/Warner Bros

What a long strange trip it's been for Primal Scream. When the Primals emerged in 1984, their pallid psychopop was draped in the unworldly innocence of 1967 (Byrds, Love, soft Velvets). By 1988 their testicles had dropped catastrophically, and they veered off in an unconvincing blues direction, complete with raunchy on-the-road excess. But Primal Scream was only gearing up for its immersion in the hedonism of British rave culture. By 1990, the band was reborn as a dance group; its Stones pastiche "I'm Losing More Than I'll Ever Have" was transformed by producer Andy Weatherall into the Ecstasy anthem "Loaded" (a big U.K. hit and currently featured in a U.S. commercial). *Screamadelica* draws on elements from every phase of Primal Scream's trajectory and is eclectic to the point of schizophrenia. Primal Scream has always been one of those groups whose musical identity is shaped by the current state of their record collection. But with *Screamadelica* it's clear that singer–main man Bobby Gillespie has absorbed so many influences (and so many mind-fizzling substances) that what's coming out the other side is new—or at least so mangled you can't work out where it comes from.

Most straightforwardly enjoyable are songs like "Come Together" and "Movin' On Up," which follow the mold of "Loaded" ("Sympathy for the Devil" meets house). "Come Together" (mis)matches Gillespie's fey, swoony vocal melody with euphoric backing from a gospel choir, while "Movin' On Up" features wonderful Stonesy guitar. The bluesy ballad "Damaged" is very 1972, very *Exile on Main Street*, Gillespie singing "stone in love wit' choo" as part of his campaign to resurrect early '70s expressions like "get your rocks off."

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Los discos locos de la revolucion

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ALSO AVAILABLE: ALBUM/TAPE/CD TYPE THING (LP/CA/CD) CRZ 008; SMALL BLOCK (EP/CA EP/CD EP) CRZ 014; "Surrender/Getaway" (Split 7" SNGL w/ CHEMICAL PEOPLE) CRZ 701.

See Big Drill Car live on tour now.

SKIN YARD — 1000 SMILING KNUCKLES

SKIN YARD gushes a nasty, volcanic lava that pumps your gale of muscle. On their new LP, 1000 SMILING KNUCKLES, shards of guitars thrust across a murderous bass and drum grind drenched in blood, sweat and screams, pound after pound. Ben's strapping throat lurks and suddenly erupts on each of these ten new psychopowered SKIN YARD songs. 1000 SMILING KNUCKLES pulsates the torso and crunches the cranium with raw psychepower. Produced by Jack Endino. CRZ 017 (LP/CA/CD).
ALSO AVAILABLE: FIST SIZED CHUNKS (LP/CA/CD) CRZ 009; "The Bullion Single" (10" SNGL) CRZ 702.

TONYALL — NEW GIRL, OLD STORY

NEW GIRL, OLD STORY is a new album of tunes played by some old friends. Tony Lombardo, the original bass dude from the DESCENDENTS, is the TONY in [illegible]. Tony's friends (Bill Stevenson, Karl Alvarez, Stephen Egerton and Scott Reynolds of ALL) are the ALL part of TONYALL. ALL back up TONY on these twelve indelibly stamped Tony type tunes that he wrote over the past decade. Tony shares the vocals with Scott and Karl on this collection of songs about girls not doin' what you'd think they'd be doin' and doin' what you wouldn't think they'd be doin'. CRZ 016 (LP/CA/CD).

=MAS discos locos=

ALL

ALLROY SEZ...(LP/CA/CD) CRZ 001; "JUST PERFECT" (12" SNGL) CRZ 003; ALLROY FOR PREZ (MINI LP/MINI CA/CD EP) CRZ 004; "SHE'S MY EX" (12" SNGL, CA SNGL) CRZ 005; ALLROY'S REVENGE (LP/CA/CD) CRZ 006; TRAILBLAZER (LP/CA/CD) CRZ 010; ALLROY SAVES (LP/CA/CD) CRZ 011

CHEMICAL PEOPLE

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In stark contrast to these period pieces, "Don't Fight It, Feel It" is absolutely contemporary trance-dance, spattered with brutal electroblips, while "Trip Inside This House" is house weirded out by a sitar sample from Miles Davis's classic *On the Corner* LP.

The best of *Screamadelica* is almost unclassifiable. Drawing on influences like Brian Wilson, and Van Morrison's *Astral Weeks*, "I'm Comin' Down" is not too many light years from the Spacemen 3 of "Playing With Fire." "Higher Than the Sun" marries colossal reverbed beats with spangly synth noise and a nihilistic lyric about going so deep into inner space you want to drift off and never touch down to reality. The "Dub Symphony" version of "Higher" is even more unearthly: Gillespie's gasp of orgasmic wonderment is looped over guest Jah Wobble's thunderous bass line until you're ready to swoon with awe. "Inner Flight" shimmers somewhere between "Good Vibrations" and the eerie, multitracked vocal choreography on Tim Buckley's *Starsailor*. The closing "Shine Like Stars" lies somewhere between 19th-century carousel music and 22nd-century shopping mall Muzak.

After *Screamadelica*, all I can say is I gotta get an introduction to Gillespie's dealer. Totally mind-blowing *(available mid-October)*

Simon Reynolds

THE BLUE AEROPLANES

Beatsongs

Ensign/Chrysalis

Aging like the wind as the band hammers hard, singer Gerard Langley seems to enjoy himself tremendously on *Beatsongs*. That's a big plus when you're flirting with pretense, trying to be a clever poet, and front a loud combo at the same time. Although Langley suffers from an overdose of vintage Dylan, Tom Verlaine, and other literary types, his out-of-breath vocals have a wry, bemused edge, suggesting he knows it's all a bit absurd.

With nearly an hour of dense, swirling sound, there's an awful lot of *stuff* here—words pour out of Langley's mouth like drugged babble, and the other planes alternate gracefully between lovely folk-rock and tougher fare. (Note the swaggering cover of Paul Simon's "The Boy in the Bubble.") Curiously, little of it leaves a lasting impression. "Yr Own World" (sic) and "Fun" boast appealing choruses, and Langley nearly transcends

self-consciousness on the rollicking "Streamers." Most of *Beatsongs*, however, has the feel of a preliminary flight, pending additional ideas and a strong editor. Especially an editor *(available mid-October)*

Jon Young

VAN MORRISON

Hymns to the Silence

PolyGram

Contrary accounts have Van Morrison as either a maddeningly consistent singer and songwriter, a born-again Christian redolent of his never-ending faith and melodicism, or simply an aging spiritual souse whose cup runneth over with Maker-minded mirth. It's Morrison's sheer genius, his miraculously confident lyrical voice, that has rescued more recent album-length efforts, specifically 1989's *Avalon Sunset*, from appealing to anybody except the most devout circle of disciples.

Hymns to the Silence is a double-length dose of Morrison more diverse than all nine '80s albums put together. How reassuring it is to hear Morrison make the stylistic rounds—blue-eyed soul, country, Irish folk (courtesy of the Chieftains on select tracks), and quick-footed rock'n'roll all appear—touching upon every phase he's passed by. Yes, Van Morrison still possesses unquestioning faith in Jesus, but self-doubt ("I'm Not Feeling It Anymore"), job security ("Professional Jealousy"), workaday angst ("Ordinary Life"), and unabashed romantic love ("I Need Your Kind of Loving") allow for a refreshingly individualistic soul-searching.

It's fair to assume that grouping the songs of faith toward the album's second stretch is meant as more than mere conceptual conceit. Though, strangely enough, *Hymns* ends up arguing for Morrison the artist over Morrison the evangelist. Amidst one tantric scat ("Take Me Back"), the kind that can either deliver Morrison or send him scampering about the floor for his rose-colored glasses, he blurts out "Oh, let me understand religion." And here we all were thinking he already had *Hymns*'s most revealing line? "It's just a job you know and it's not sweet Lorraine." *(available mid-October)*

Alec Foege

WESTWORLD

Movers and Shakers

Savage

The new Metallica album blows. So as a disappointed and aging speed-metal geek I'd like nothing better than to tear some fruity disco album to pieces. But y'know what? *Movers and Shakers* is actually aces—robotic line-dance fodder which resembles nothing so much as elves feeding a big computer 12-inchers of Pat Benatar's early fake-Eurodisco outing, "My Clone Sleeps Alone," ZZ Top's *Eliminator* album, some Gap Band, and a straight face.

In "Lip Syncher" the confession of phoniness is the come-on; "Last White Buffalo" may be the most limo-weary lament ever produced by complete unknowns. Could *you* sing "love like a laser?" Best of all is "Cheap & Nasty Pt. 2," with a one-note bump-and-grind riff so hard and insistent it needs a condom, and wheezy, distorted organ à la Keith Emerson with the Nice. Sure stomps anything on Metallicash's *Smell the Glove*. *(available mid-October)*

Tom Nordlie

JOHN MELLENCAMP

Whenever We Wanted

Mercury

The Coug' is back. Except he's no longer the Coug'—not even by middle name. Only fair, I suppose. We all have to grow up sometime, but too bad. It was a cool handle. The name drop seems to have affected his music, too, which is doubly unfortunate—*Whenever We Wanted* is a far more bare-bones kind of deal than his previous few records; gone are the fiddle and accordion flavorings of *Lonesome Jubilee*–era 'Camp. What we get instead is an aging guy who wants to rock. But you know what? Old guys can't rock.

No one has ever doubted Mellencamp's sincerity, at least not since "Jack and Diane." He's a very feeling guy. Which for a lot of people, evidently, is touching, but what always appealed to me about Johnny was less his emotions and more his uncannily expansive songwriting. I don't mean competence or craft (which certainly he has, but so what) Mellencamp's sheer exuberance has carried him from *Uh Huh* through *Big Daddy*, although on the latter he seemed to be getting a bit jaded ("Pop Singer"). But *Whenever We Wanted*, for all its lean meanness, is the least exuberant record Mellencamp's made in years.

Not to say it's a total drag or anything, and it's certainly far from a rote effort, but I don't think we should lower our expectations of John just because he turns 40 right about the date the album hits the streets. Maybe he's preoccupied with his new movie *(available mid-October)*

Jim Greer

DIRE STRAITS

On Every Street

Warner Bros.

My Scandahoovian pal Johan says that Dire Straits are what Elvis would have sounded like if the Devil were Swedish. Which means—in case you were wondering—that Dire Straits present an altogether cleaner, brighter, more orderly version of rock than did Mr. Presley (in his finest moments). On *On Every Street*, the shiny happy surfaces of the music distract from the Straits' angular, crafty songs. Wisps of melancholy do appear—a guitar lick here, a lyric there—but rarely seem more than mood lighting. Mark Knopfler's throat, never the most expressive instrument in the biz, seems to have been sandpapered to a silky nub.

On "Calling Elvis," the lead-off track, Knopfler croons a quiet plea to the King ("Calling Elvis—I'm here all alone"), which—due in no small part to the combination of uninspired lyrics with an unfortunate guitar solo—falls flat on its Presley. Conversely, the title track is a well-constructed ballad whose slow burn is enhanced by a creamy arrangement—one of the few times on this record where the production livens rather than

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REAL WORLD

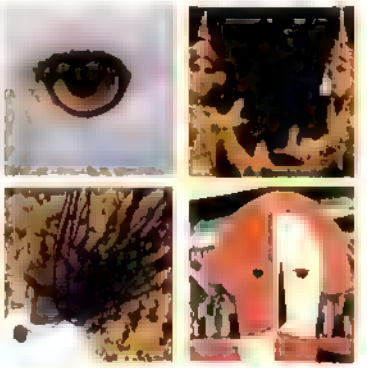
BY ALEC FOEGE

WESTERN POP MUSIC PLAYS loud throughout the world, it's no surprise Americans in general have long resisted foreign strains. Around the globe, specifically American music stands for all that is modern and new. Bruce Springsteen, James Brown, Michael Jackson—these are the true world musicians, at least according to international sales figures. In an effort to counter the balance, Peter Gabriel, in collaboration with the British organization WOMAD (World of Music, Arts and Dance), has lured performers since 1989 from countries underrepresented in the Western market to record at his studio, a refurbished 18th-century mill in County Wiltshire, near Bath, England.

The Real Music label follows Gabriel's own personal tastes, which usually tip toward open-throated vocals and rhythmic grooves that swirl into manic, passion-filled eddies. Gabriel has subsequently selected music from India, China, Mozambique, and Cambodia, among other countries. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, the foremost modern practitioner of *qawwali*, originally a Pakistani sacred music, was the performer that got me hooked. The label's best seller, Khan has already recorded two follow-ups to 1989's *Shahen-Shah*, though the most recent, *Shahbaaz*, features Khan's ecstatic vocals in a suspiciously Western mode.

The true appeal of Real World, ironically, is being able to shadow Gabriel's picks. If you like one album, the next is easier—you've got a fellow listener to trust. *Homrong*, a recent release from the Musicians of the National Dance Company of Cambodia, is fragile, droopy music in a minor key, a music to this day threatened by the killing Khmer Rouge. Less exotic and more performance-oriented, Zaire's Tabu Ley, an African pop star, delivers *Babeti Soukous*. Its electric guitars, drum breaks, and syncopated horn section lend parallels to American funk.

Mari Boine Persen of Sámpi (Lapland) recorded her Real World album, *Gula Gula*, in Oslo. Persen is a series oddball: She started writing and singing to combat persecution as a Lapp in Scandanavia, yet her modern music sounds too much like Toni Childs's to tweak Western ears. Similarly, Geoffrey Oryema's *Exile* suffers direct intervention of producer Brian Eno and Gabriel. Too many tracks sound like "Shock the Monkey" played backward.



Real covers from Real World.

Real World, thanks to a distribution deal with Virgin Records, has issued 20 full-length, attractively packaged albums in only two years, though using the term *world music* to describe these discs seems presumptuous. To imply that the album *Luxor to Isna* by the Musicians of the Nile, for example—no doubt appealing with its droning blend of the *ārghūl*, a double-reed clarinet, and the *rababah*, a two-stringed violin—better embodies the global heartbeat than any number of exceptional Western albums reeks of the kind of paternalism that once deemed American blacks "natural" performers. So pick favorites: My current is *The Wild Field* by the Dmitri Pokrovsky Ensemble. I know it's only Russian folk, but I like it.

---

deadens the songs.

Despite the absence of a silly baseball-type song like "Walk of Life" (from *Brothers in Arms*), *On Every Street* is overall a pretty enjoyable affair—once you stop looking at it as a "rock" record and appreciate its high-quality background music value. I am also happy to announce that, to the best of my knowledge, Sting does not appear on this album. *(available mid-October)*

Jim Greer

ASTER AWEKE

Kabu

Columbia

On her corporate debut, *Aster*, this Ethiopian twister could buck your ears like a blowjob hot flash. With keen quavering majesty, she sang as though she were possessed most passionately by her own vocal prowess, while the inevitable comparisons to the young Aretha, whose expressionist throat culture she undoubtedly dug, were for once actually deserved. The disc's pumping Stax-influenced horns, stately African marches, and inscrutable Arab-influenced melodies all augured the presence of one formidably exotic hot tomato. *Kabu*, her follow-up, should still be on your shopping list too, of course—a single Aweke being worth a thousand Poisons on the cosmic tote board—but listen to it as though it were a tentative introduction rather than a mildly disappointing second album.

Because first of all you're going to want to hear "Eyoha," wherein Aster's mighty quavering pipes serenade a noble procession of glorious Afrobeat horns. Here and on "Yedi Gosh" she cuts loose where she cuts best: on an R&B tip that echoes from Africa to Motown memories and back again. "Kezira" gives Senegalese *mbalax* a Caribbean lilt, while much of the rest of *Kabu* takes a more meditatively inward turn. Keyboards were unfortunately gooped on by British deflavorizers Iain Scott and Bunt Stafford Clark (of Najma fame), whose production sounds as snooty as their monikers. They try to bury her, but Aweke's microtones slash through their drones like a rusty serrated knife; Amharic lyrics working on the level of pure music, belting potent expatriate blues. *(available mid-October)*

Richard Gehr

GIPSY KINGS

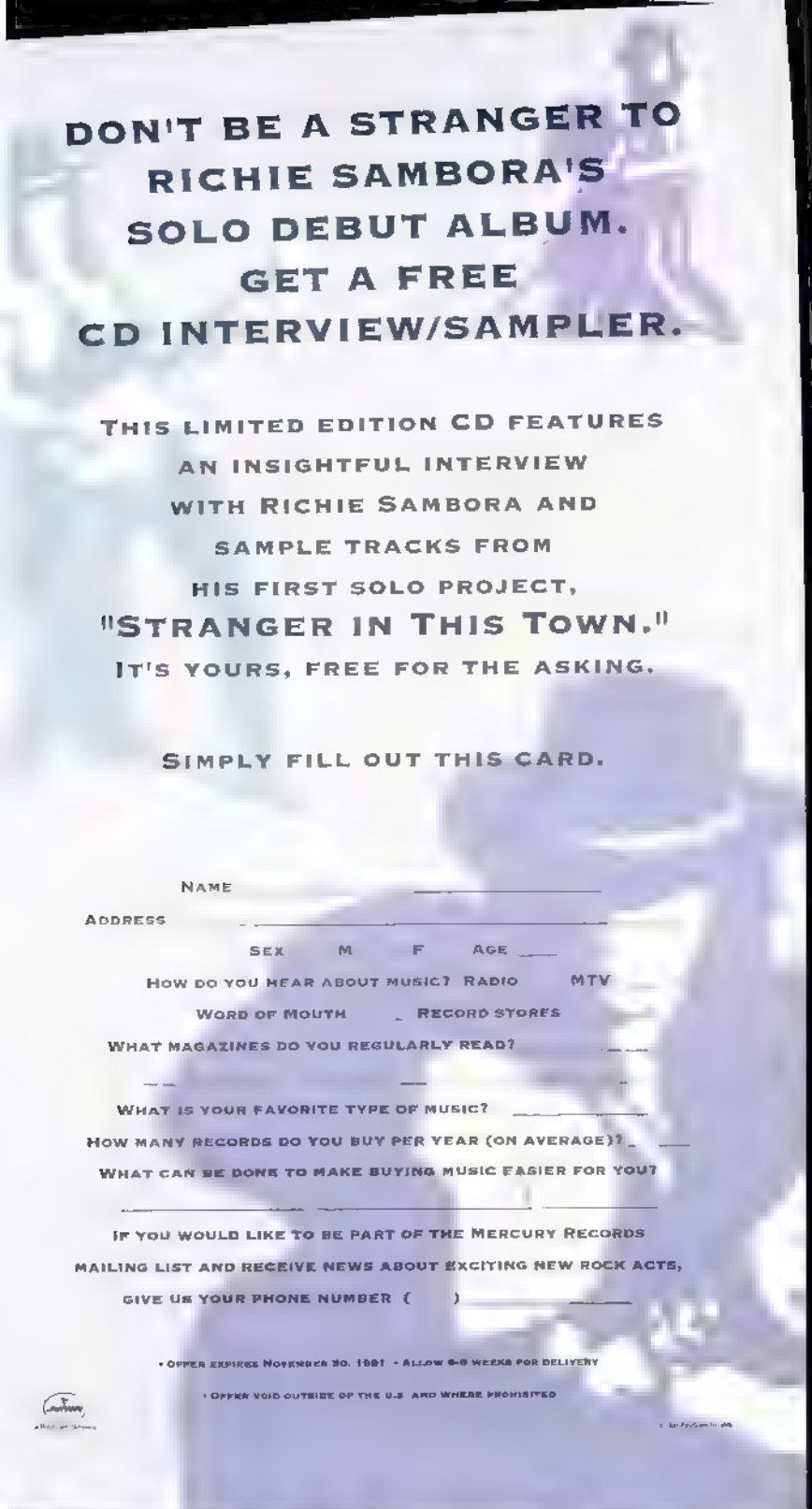
Este Mundo

Elektra

Highbrow ethnomusicalia snobs hate the Gipsy Kings, I guess, because they seem so genteel—all that bullfighter-bearing-roses melodrama, the whole chest-haired bistro thing. But the way I look at it, if their corn keeps the Kings out of the pages of *Folklore This Month*, more power to 'em. And their glitz might be why they're so hep among middlebrow VH-1ers, but I bet their godhead rhythm section's got something to do with it, too.

See, the Kings are just six acoustic strummers, three of whom warble like well-lubricated love goats. But on 1989's swell *Mosaique* they flushed the authenticity stale and went poly-rhythmic, mixing salsa-to-*rai* electro-percussion and symphony spans and a "Volare" redo into the most outlandishly overboard flamenco-disco merger since Santa Esmeralda's deadly 1978 classic, *Beauty*. Since then, these frogeaters have managed to steer both "Hotel California" and (with Bananarama's help) the Doobies' "Long Train Running" toward post-Romantic hip-grind technoblues.

Este Mundo sounds like it's got horns, castanets, horror echo, Miles Davis *On the Corner* jungle chatter, disco strings, bongos. Nothing is off limits, which is the way *all* music should work. Guitars work as rhythm hooks and voluption, too. And the



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Fela Anikulapo Kuti *Original Sufferhead*

BY LARRY BIRNBAUM

GENIUS, CHARLATAN, OR MAYBE a little of both, Fela Anikulapo Kuti is Africa's most notorious musician. In 1977 Nigerian soldiers stormed his palatial Lagos estate, beat him senseless, tortured his followers, threw his 82-year-old mother out an upstairs window, and burned his self-proclaimed "Kalakuta Republic" to the ground, destroying his instruments, recording studio, and master tapes. In the mid-'80s, Amnesty International helped spring him from prison after a dubious currency-smuggling conviction, paving the way for his first full-scale tour of the U.S., where he was hailed as a human-rights hero.

His lyrics, rhythmically ranted in precisely broken English, mock the military and champion the oppressed, but offstage he's as imperious as any dictator; Miles Davis and James Brown, his early idols, are humble by comparison. Stories abound of his setting fire to hotel rooms, puffing Marley-esque spliffs on commercial airliners, firing penniless band members on overseas gigs, making interviewers cool their heels for days and then receiving them in his underwear amid flunkies, wives (he married 27 at once in 1978), and children.

Born Fela Ransome Kuti in 1938, he shocked his middle-class parents (his father was a Protestant minister, his mother a prominent left-wing activist) by studying music in London, where they'd sent him to study medicine. He returned to Nigeria with a highlife band, Koola Lobitos, but after hanging out with the Black Panthers on a California trip he changed his group's name to Afrika 70, his music's name to Afrobeat, and his own middle name to Anikulapo—"having control over death." He became the first modern Afropopster to win Western recognition when he cut a live album with Ginger Baker, though at home he was never as popular as juju star King Sunny Adé.

Fela's insinuating baritone is a potent preacher's tool.

His latest American release, *Original Sufferhead* (Shanachie), was recorded a decade ago by the renamed Egypt 80 band. By this time pioneering drummer Tony Allen had left the band. Moodier and less focused than *Zombie*, the album that sparked the Kalakuta raid, it recycles the same trademark riffs—chicken-scratch guitar, vamping organ, massed brass, female chorus, jazzy horn solos, layered drumming—and antiestablishment doggerel. The preglasnost message is dated (are multinational corporations really responsible for African corruption?), but the beat, a propulsive cross between salsa and Sun Ra, is hypnotically persuasive, and Fela's insinuating baritone is a potent preacher's tool.

This year Fela sojourned in New York, gave a marathon show at the Apollo with his 30-member troupe, and collected the usual raves for his music, showmanship, and politics. But his crusading rhetoric rings hollow now; worse, the Nigerian pop scene has passed him by, with the *fuji* sound, at once rootsier and more futuristic, on the rise. Still, no one should go to jail for pig-headed self-righteousness—not even Axl Rose.

You know when you hear a great song on the radio and wonder, "Who was that?" Then instead of the D.J. announcing the band's name, you hear a commercial for low-cost insurance and spend the rest of the day with the song in your head and no way to get the clerk at the record store to name that tune... These are those bands.

THE CANDY SKINS
Space I'm In
"They are a band with attitude playing lush, tuneful pop."-Sounds
Their debut album is filled with undeniably fresh and utterly tasteful pop melodies including "For What It's Worth," "So Easy" and "Submarine Song."

NORTHSIDE
Chicken Rhythms
"fluid funk...spacious, melodic guitars and expansive melodies"-SPIN
The debut album produced by Ian Broudie (Echo & The Bunnymen, The Lightning Seeds) from one of the U.K.'s most highly-acclaimed, newly-emerging bands. Featuring "Take 5," "Shall We Take A Trip" and "Tour De World."

GEFFEN

sing-Kings go *wild*, chattering samba-scat–style, yelling at lungtops. This shit rocks! So keep your "good taste" to yourself. *(available late September)*

Chuck Eddy

ERIC GALES BAND

Eric Gales Band

Elektra

I can peel myself off the back wall but I still can't shut my jaw. Guitar gods generally bore me because too much technique leaves me with too little feel. But Eric Gales fires a single shot that hits me in my ass and in my heart. Comparisons to Hendrix are not farfetched, just misguided. If Jimi took us to new galaxies, Eric finds unknown worlds within the charted universe. (The intro to "Changes in Emotion" may be his Hendrix nod.)

The ten tracks on *Eric Gales Band* are not exercises but real songs, and

in one after another the kid (Gales is 16!) plays a soulful, wailing guitar. And tasteful, too—in-your-face but not obnoxious. The trio is from Memphis and features Eric's brother on bass and vocals. The playing's warmth may come from the blood, the band's shuffle may come from the geography, but Eric's playing is God's gift, and it'll convert all doubters. A line in "Piece of My Soul" goes, "All I want to do is be the best that I can be." This is the stuff of legend. *(available late October)*

Robert Gordon

LINTON KWESI JOHNSON

Tings an' Times

Island

Back when rap's idea of a political stance was to denounce sucker MCs, Linton Kwesi Johnson was taking reggae's equivalent—toasting—and transforming it into politically charged "dub poetry" that assailed racism and police brutality. Six years after the release of LKJ's last studio album, attacks on bigotry and law-enforcement excess are as essential to the rap repertoire as macho (and "macha") braggadocio and Uzi references. But while rap sometimes splays a few innocent bystanders along the way (women, gays, Jews), LKJ's cool, taut analyses have always been on target.

LKJ's new album, *Tings an' Times*, finds him just as committed to fighting oppression, but those who like their politics strident and simplistic will be disappointed. The diversity of the music, inflecting reggae with jazz, South African, and middle eastern influences and incorporating everything from a trombone to an accordion, brilliantly complements the shifting moods of the lyrics. The studied rage of "Story" suddenly bursts into a furious violin solo. "Mi Revalueshanary Fren" expresses reservations about the implications of the changes in Eastern Europe, then breaks out into a celebratory, danceable catalog of ousted dictators. Even the title track leavens its despairing description of burnout with a soaring piano solo full of hope and optimism. *(available mid-October)*

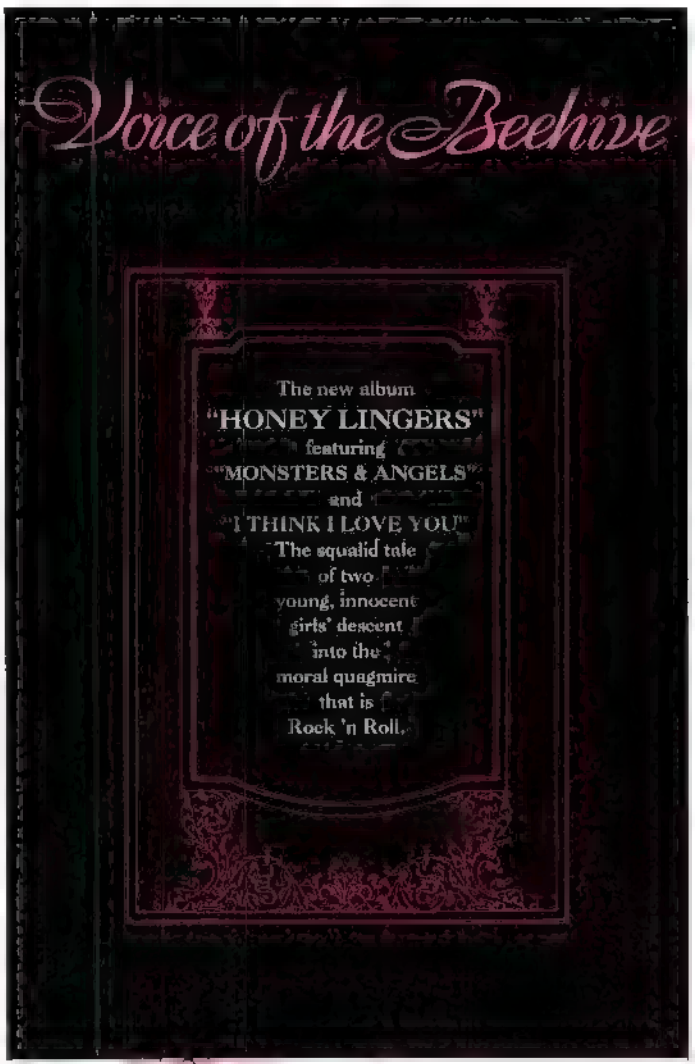
Al Weisel

DEL SHANNON

Rock On!

Gone Going/MCA

A great rock'n'roller with a honky-tonk soul, Del Shannon captured the same misery and dread that gave Hank Williams's work such chilling resonance, which is why his hoariest songs still raise goose bumps. Add to the list of Shannon classics *Rock On!*, not a crass posthumous cash-in but a true tour de force of seething passions. Awash in waves of strumming guitars and rumbling drums, he acts out one tortured vignette after another, including "Walk Away," epic regret spiced by roller-rink organ, "Lost in a Memory," which blends twangy licks and hopeless obsession, and a killer remake of



IF A RADIO SHOW IS BROADCAST IN ENGLAND
BUT NO ONE IN AMERICA HEARS IT
WAS IT REALLY BROADCAST?

(OF COURSE)

THE PEEL SESSIONS

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ADAM & THE ANTS
HAPPY MONDAYS
STIFF LITTLE FINGERS
JOY DIVISION
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RUTS
WEDDING PRESENT
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CURE
SMITHS
FALL
UNDERTONES
ONLY ONES
GANG OF FOUR
BUZZCOCKS
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NAIRD

"I Go to Pieces."

While producers Jeff Lynne and Mike Campbell build an attractive wall of sound, there's never any question who's in command: Even a relatively upbeat tune like "Are You Lovin' Me Too" finds Shannon consumed with emotion, practically choking on his words. Despite the prosaic title, *Rock On!* makes a fine farewell from an artist who never held back. Thanks, Del. *(available late October)*

Jon Young

RICHIE SAMBORA

Stranger in This Town

Mercury

As lead guitarist for Bon Jovi, Richie Sambora is as responsible as any human could be for the dilution of "heavy metal" into pine-scented fluff you could sell ladies' shoes with; "Wanted Dead or Alive," that's *his*.

But while BJ at least delivers brittle, effective hooks and a signature sound, the supposed flights of freedom here are stupefyingly derivative. Behold two Bad Company outtakes (title track; "Ballad of Youth"), a Firm "on the road" anthem ("Mr. Bluesman"), Styx with Dennis DeYoung writing ("Father Time"), Whitesnake's cautiously insincere "Is This Love?" ("Church of Desire"), a future Michelob ad ("One Light Burning"), one so-so Bon Jovi blueprint ("River of Love"), and yet another emotion-mixer where former-object-of-desire-turns-sex-industry-worker, called "Rosie" (see also: J. Geils, Van Halen, Poison, Tony Orlando and Dawn, et cetera). Sambora's a competent craftsman, but he's laundered clichés for so long that something's soaked through. *(available mid-September)*

Tom Nordlie

SHONEN KNIFE

712

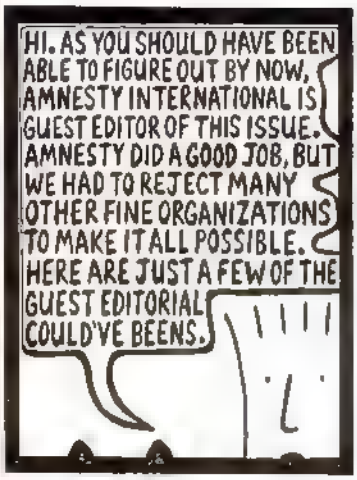
Rockville/Gasatanka

Lighting postgrad burnout in the early '80s, the three Japanese women in Shonen Knife made two records combining Ramones guitar with the surreal randomness of the stories kids tell, full of animals, superheroes, optimism, and dread. A follow-up cataloging their pleasures—specifically, junk food—won the hearts of those sourballs populating U.S. indieland, who paid tribute with an album of covers.

On *712*, Shonen Knife returns the favor, serving up the Beatles and Big Dipper, rap and hardcore, even "The Luck of the Irish." When cholesterol is mentioned in "Diet Run," fans may fear the worst.

But Michie, Naoko, and Atsuko still triumph when they insert the refer-

Little Sutty's Quest for Music *by Mark Blackwell*


HI. AS YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FIGURE OUT BY NOW, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IS GUEST EDITOR OF THIS ISSUE. AMNESTY DID A GOOD JOB, BUT WE HAD TO REJECT MANY OTHER FINE ORGANIZATIONS TO MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE. HERE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE GUEST EDITORIAL COULD'VE BEENS.

ents of pop stardom into their own inimitable universe. New York, London, Paris, Munich? "Osaka is the best town!" Don't wanna go to work? "You don't have to be a walrus. . . . / You don't have to be an eggman." Does a song called "Blue Oyster Cult" imply '70s influences? Nope, just a bout with food poisoning. *(available mid-September)*

Jon Fleissner

PULNOC

City of Hysteria
Arista

And what of the link between oppression and matters of artistic expression? Pulnoc (pronounced POOL-notes), a prominent Czech

band borne out of the now-legendary group Plastic People of the Universe, issues its first worldwide release only two years into the history of a capitalist Czechoslovakia. During the '70s and '80s members of the Plastic People did hard time for playing thoughtful rock and free jazz; they even recorded two albums at dissident-turned-President Vaclav Havel's farm. But simply said, *City of Hysteria*'s attractively blunt, nihilistic hue (a streamlined rush inspired by the Velvet Underground) probably has less to do with the band's gestation under the aegis of Communism than the clipped Czech language as uttered by a bunch of dedicated musicians with hipster record collections. It's a welcome surprise: Europeans on the average don't know diddly about Diddley.

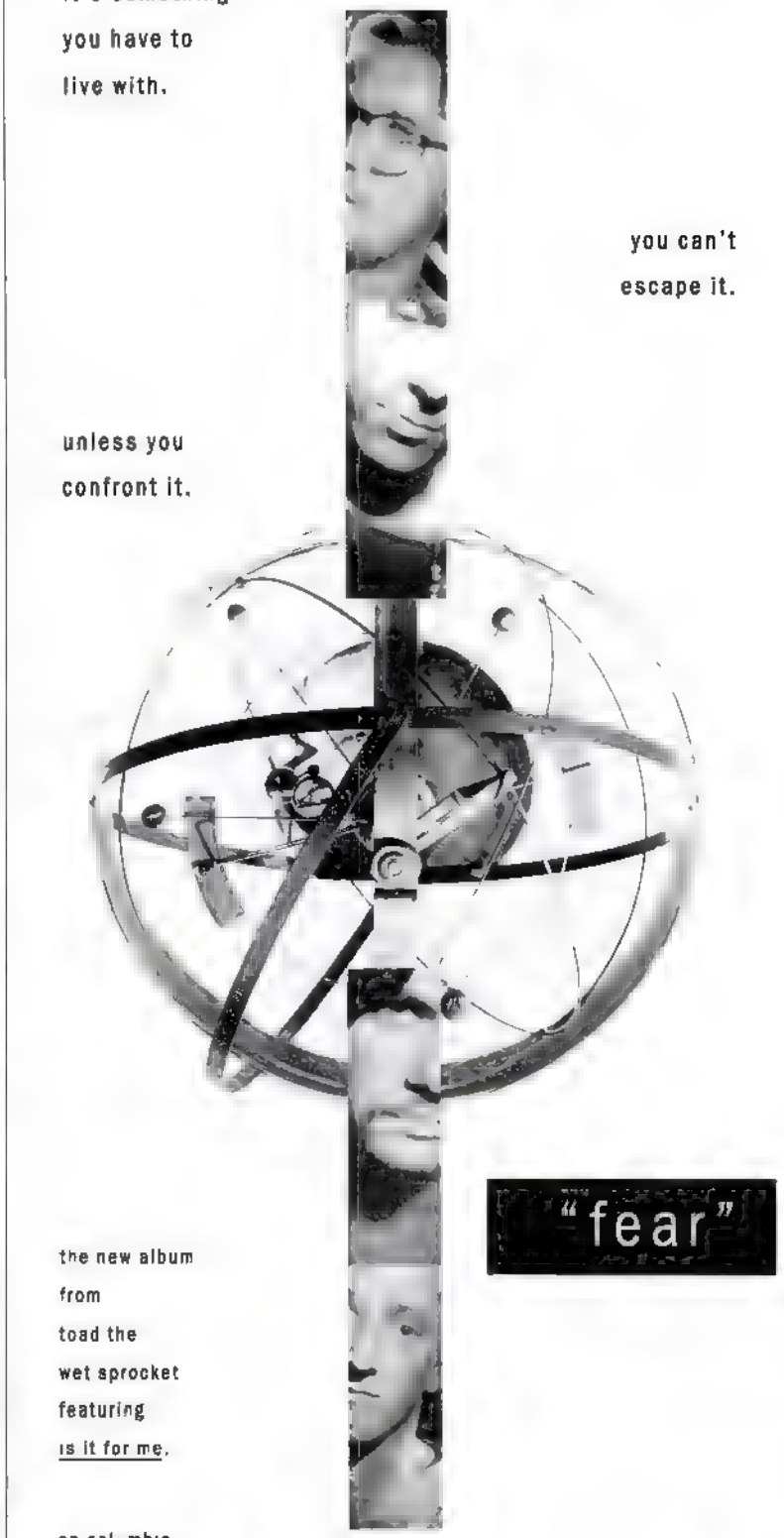
"What once was has not departed / It still remains with me" runs the (translated) wisdom of "It's Dangerous," *Hysteria*'s leadoff track. No doubt Pulnoc—seven musicians including a cellist, keyboard player, and lead singer Michaela Nemcova—relishes the malevolent metaphor; though the three-chord drone of "City of Hysteria" (sung in English) owes as much to campy Roxy Music as to seriocomic Velvet Underground. Frequently throughout, cello, guitars, and keyboards lurch in one mammoth tandem groove, tempered only by that blessed backbeat.

Thankfully, Nemcova's witchy warble graces even the album's sole cover (VU's "All Tomorrow's Parties") with savvy. "Destroying Angels (White Mushrooms)," "I Sweep but Don't Clean," and "Nightmares," titles of some of the strongest songs, touch on a prevalent absurdism.

Perhaps persecution did add an essential tartness to Pulnoc's sound, though I doubt it. Lazing about, decadence bred from boredom: These are the things great rock is made from. Here's to freedom of expression and sloth. *(available mid-October)*

Alec Foege

New Records by: Meat Puppets, Lard
Special Issue-
SPIN
GUEST EDITOR: Mc DONALD'S
Exclusive Interviews:
Ronald McDonald On Fast Food, Fast Cars, and Fast Women
Mayor McCheese
The Grimace
Fear of Frying: Get Over It!
Health Alert: Being A Vegetarian Will Kill You!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Capital Punishment

continued from page 69

said, "I just didn't think he was smart enough." Jones's lawyer, Neal Walker, went to talk to that juror, who had no idea why he had been struck from the jury, and found a college-educated man he describes as "very bright." "His intelligence had nothing to do with his being struck from the jury," claims Walker. "It was because he was black."

Perhaps the most critical factor in the capital punishment lottery is income. The more money you have, the higher quality legal representation you'll get. And that can mean everything in a capital case. "The death penalty is about race, poverty, politics, and geography," says Bright. "In this part of the country, people are not sentenced to death for committing the worst crime—they are sentenced to death for having the worst lawyer. That's the major consequence of poverty. Poor people get sentenced to death because they're represented by court-appointed lawyers in cases that sometimes take as little as a day to try."

Most capital defendants are too poor to hire their own lawyers and are forced to settle for court-appointed lawyers, who sometimes are paid as little as five dollars an hour. Bright testified in 1990 to a congressional committee and cited cases where prisoners were defended by lawyers who had never handled a criminal trial before, had no knowledge of capital punishment, and failed to present compelling evidence of their clients' background and medical records, such as mental retardation or brain damage, that may have won them clemency. In Mississippi, a man was sentenced to death after being represented by a "lawyer" who was a third-year law student. Says Bright, "I've seen cases in which lawyers were drunk or addicted to drugs themselves. One man who was executed in Georgia met his lawyer in the prison yard shortly after his sentence was imposed. The lawyer had been sentenced for state and federal drug violation.

"In another case I handled, a woman had killed her husband who had severely abused her and her daughter for years. She got the death penalty. During the trial, her lawyer was so drunk that the judge sent *him* to a cell, and then sent her to a cell, and produced them both the next day to continue the trial. The lawyer failed to get the medical records showing all the times this woman and her daughter had been to the hospital. . . . So the jury didn't really believe they had been brutalized. And she got the death penalty."

Sister Helen Prejean is a Catholic nun who has worked with New Orleans death row prisoners, their families, and the families of murder victims for the past five years.

"The outrage felt when a life is taken is a hundred fold greater when it's a white life," she says. "The DA's office will spend tremendous energy on the case of a white tourist killed in New Orleans. Eighty-five to 90 percent of the murder cases in this city have black victims, yet those cases do not *begin* to get the same kind of attention and effort."

"The death penalty has nothing to do with the severity of the crime," Sister Prejean insists. "Let me give you an example. There was a white man, a rich furniture dealer in New Orleans named Aaron Mintz, who was indicted for murdering his wife. He hired the best attorneys, and got expert witnesses to show how the wife was suicidal and all kinds of stuff. And he walked out of that court room a free man. At the end of his trial, his son stood on the steps of the court house, with tears running down his cheeks. All the TV cameras were on him and he said, 'I know if my father had not spent a quarter of a million dollars on his defense, he would not have been acquitted.'"

One of the most common arguments for the death penalty is that it is a deterrent to violent crime. Numerous studies have shown this to be false.

"I have been through three executions, and it is the most dehumanizing thing you can imagine on this earth," she says. "One day we are going to recognize that we are deceiving and betraying something in ourselves by having the death penalty, because we are reducing ourselves to imitating the very kind of

violence that we say we want to eliminate from our society."

ELIZABETH HARVEY DOES NOT agree. In Louisiana in 1984, her daughter Faith, on the night before she was to join the Army, was savagely raped, brutalized, and murdered by a man whose execution she and her husband subsequently witnessed. "He received the punishment he deserved," she says, speaking slowly and drawing deep breaths as if to maintain her composure. "I believe if a person murders then they should give their own life in return. He put himself into that chair to be executed, nobody else did that. I was hoping that Robert Lee Willie would express some kind of remorse for the crimes that he committed, but he did not. So I have no remorse for him whatsoever. The coroner told me that my daughter was so brutally raped that her life could never have been saved even if they had not slit her throat."

The Harveys felt the execution of their daughter's murderer was just. "There are too many loopholes in the system. The man who killed my daughter had killed before and had escaped from prison before. How could we guarantee that he wouldn't do it again?" she says. "There is no way that I could have lived with myself if he had gotten off and murdered somebody else. There is no way I could have faced the mother of that victim. I do believe that all life is precious. But when I saw that man executed, of course it didn't take any of the pain away, but at least I knew that he could not murder again."

Finally, the most horrifying scenario that the death penalty presents: the execution of the innocent. According to Amnesty International, at least 23 wrongly convicted people are reported to have been executed in the U.S. this century.

A very young age, mental illness, and retardation or mitigating circumstances has not deterred certain courts from issuing the death penalty on people who were under 18 at the time of their crime, which is a violation of international treaties and guidelines.

"To make absolutely certain means you do nothing," argues Bowers. "I don't mean to be cold and cruel but if you tell me that we cannot have a criminal justice system that convicts people unless we are absolutely sure they are guilty, then we'll never do anything. And the law says you have to be guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, excluding every other reasonable hypothesis, but not certain. Nothing is certain except death."

Precisely. And somehow, despite all the justifications, despite all the emotions, and all the good reasons to execute—no, to kill—it is our moral obligation to refrain from it. The madness is in the planning, in the detail, in the bureaucracy of human elimination. The madness is in the conducting gel being massaged into a retarded boy's head in the middle of the night as he asks, "Why do you have to do this?" As Terry Roach's lawyer points out, "If most murderers had ten minutes to think it over, they wouldn't do it. The system takes ten years to kill."

AIDS

continued from page 94

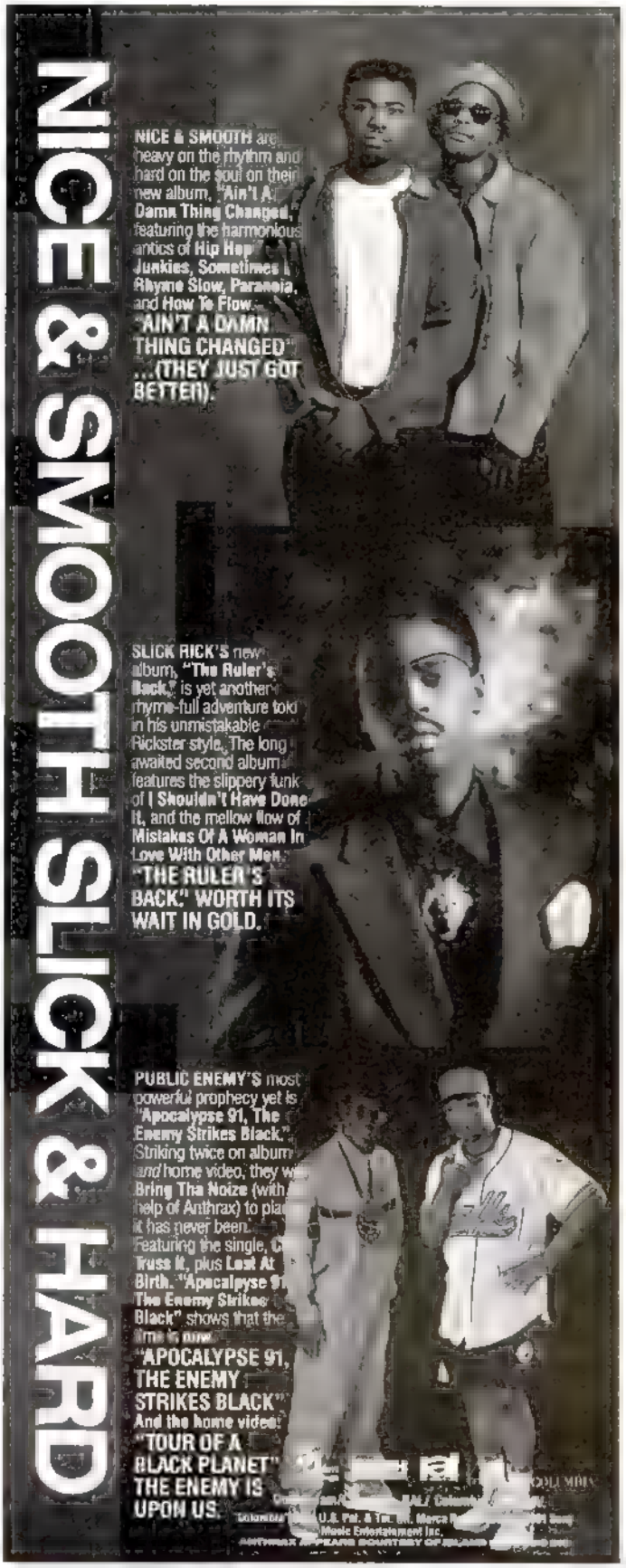
they don't get medical care or HIV prevention counseling."

"We know from the history of the epidemic and from every sound public health principle we know of," Isbell insists, "that discriminatory policies exacerbate rather than reduce the danger of the HIV epidemic. The government has also failed to promote a frank, explicit, nonjudgmental HIV prevention campaign. Instead all we get are sermons from George Bush about behavior change. But if people don't know what kind of behaviors we're talking about—if the government is too squeamish to talk about human sexuality when it comes to a sexually transmissible agent, then we're completely lacking in leadership."

The CDC has received about 120,000 letters demanding that HIV be taken off the exclusion list. If, as the HHS claims, the sole issue is cost to the health care system, then why doesn't the U.S. government go ahead and exclude the elderly, or people with signs of cancer, kidney disease, heart disease and so on, from entering the U.S.?

The answer is unspoken, and obvious. AIDS carries an enormous stigma. Instead of trying to diffuse it, the U.S. government has chosen to exacerbate it. When the going gets tough, the tough close the borders.

Jonathan Mann, the former head of the World Health Organization's Global Programme on AIDS, is currently traveling the world, looking for an alternative site for the International AIDS Conference. He's looking for a more decent country than ours.


NICE & SMOOTH
NICE & SMOOTH are heavy on the rhythm and hard on the soul on their new album, "Ain't A Damn Thing Changed," featuring the harmonious antics of Hip Hop Junkies, Sometimes I Rhyme Slow, Paranoia, and How To Flow. "AIN'T A DAMN THING CHANGED" ...(THEY JUST GOT BETTER).
SLICK RICK'S new album, "The Ruler's Back," is yet another rhyme-full adventure told in his unmistakable Rickster style. The long awaited second album features the slippery funk of I Shouldn't Have Done It, and the mellow flow of Mistakes Of A Woman In Love With Other Men. "THE RULER'S BACK." WORTH ITS WAIT IN GOLD.
PUBLIC ENEMY'S most powerful prophecy yet is "Apocalypse 91, The Enemy Strikes Black." Striking twice on album and home video, they will Bring Tha Noize (with the help of Anthrax) to places it has never been. Featuring the single, Can't Truss It, plus Lost At Birth. "Apocalypse 91, The Enemy Strikes Black" shows that the time is now. "APOCALYPSE 91, THE ENEMY STRIKES BLACK" And the home video: "TOUR OF A BLACK PLANET" THE ENEMY IS UPON US.

THE CULT
CEREMONY

THE NEW ALBUM

FEATURING "WILD HEARTED SON"

Sinéad O'Connor

continued from page 51

SPIN: What about Public Enemy?
O'Connor: I think Public Enemy have done a hell amount of good. I think Professor Griff is a fucking madman. I think he is completely mental. But otherwise I think they've done a hell of a lot of good. The hip hop movement, as far as I'm concerned, and the reggae movement have done so much good, more than I have ever experienced.
SPIN: It's fascinating to hear you say that because rap takes such a beating because of the sexism elements.

"I think that television should be abolished completely. I think it's completely destructive and there's nothing positive about it, nothing at all."

O'Connor: Why doesn't heavy metal?
SPIN: Because it's predominantly white, I guess.
O'Connor: Exactly. It's alright for white men to be sexy. It's not alright for black men to be sexy. The second we as white women started to become attracted to black men that's when the trouble started. The second we started thinking, "Oh, these are nice people," that's when the trouble started. They don't want us having black men's babies. They don't want us understanding the black man and the black race.
SPIN: Everyone has to be careful not to buy their own bullshit? How do you achieve that?
O'Connor: I question myself constantly. And because of my spiritual beliefs. I think it helps a lot of the time not to have a huge opinion of yourself. But because God knows if I'm being a fucking wanker.
SPIN: How do you handle celebrity?
O'Connor: I just get used to it. I didn't like it at all and there are aspects of it that I don't like, but that's what I've been given.
SPIN: Do you find that celebrity insulates you from the world?
O'Connor: You mean makes it so that I don't necessarily know what life is like for other people?
SPIN: I mean that you're not treated the same way as the average person is.
O'Connor: But I am an average person, and I am treated in the same way. I experience a lot of prejudice because of my look, because of who I am, what I am, and what I stand for. The same as everybody else.
SPIN: It's because you intimidate people.
O'Connor: Not on purpose. They are intimidated by me because I don't conform to what they expect because I have a shaved head, because I'm outspoken and direct. But if they are intimidated by that, it's not my problem. I have to struggle with that, but I mustn't lose myself in the struggle. I think one thing celebrity does, it's provided me with a platform upon which and through which I can actually make a difference, to some extent. And that is what I intend to do.
SPIN: Do you feel alone?
O'Connor: No, no, I don't. I did feel very isolated, yeah. Because people have preconceived ideas about you and what kind of person you are.
SPIN: Are you working on any new music now?
O'Connor: No.
SPIN: Do you intend to in the near future?
O'Connor: Not for a long time, no.
SPIN: How long? A year?
O'Connor: I have no idea. But I have nothing left to say musically at the moment.
SPIN: I think, to a degree, people like your controversialness.
O'Connor: Far more than the media made it out to be. 'Cause I've never received an offensive letter from anybody. I've received hundreds and hundreds of letters of support from real people.
SPIN: How do you galvanize other artists to take as forceful a stand as you do?
O'Connor: You don't. You just galvanize yourself. I gave up with other artists.
SPIN: You tried?
O'Connor: I expected other people to put their money where their mouths have been during the Grammys controversy. But now I give up. I'm just gonna do myself what I want to do, and they can all go and fuck themselves. Either they are with me or not; I don't care. I think that if you look at the hip hop movement, they are the only people

that have fought for the truth in any way, and they are the ones who are probably the most browbeaten. It is easy to browbeat them because they are black.

SPIN: They are also intimidating and threatening.

O'Connor: Because they are black. Because you know that when you are in a room full of black people that they might have a right to have a problem with you.

SPIN: Who are your heroes today?

O'Connor: The black people are my heroes. Bob Marley is a huge hero of mine. I think that the African culture and the people who have fought for the survival of the African culture are my heroes and my role models. The Buddhists are my role models.

SPIN: Do you love easily? Is it easy for you to fall in love?

O'Connor: Oh yeah. It's not easy for me to show love. It's not easy for me to feel comfortable with the expression of either verbal or physical love because I'm—of course, I don't know, self-conscious or I'm not so sure of myself.

SPIN: In child abuse, what part of it is, in your mind, unintended?

O'Connor: It's all unintended.

SPIN: It's all unintended?

O'Connor: It's all unintended. It's just adult children with their children. All of it was unintended.

SPIN: Did you ever talk to your mother about this?

O'Connor: No, my mother died long before I could talk to her about it, but I know that she knows what I think and how I feel. But I've spoken to my father a good bit about it. It's all unintended.

SPIN: Was he aware of it going on?

O'Connor: Yeah, he was. And he did his level best; he did everything he could do, that he had the capacity to do. It's all unintended.

SPIN: Did you in your heart of hearts wish he would have just come by with a van one night and taken you kids away?

O'Connor: Well, he did that, he did that. But we wanted our mother, too.

SPIN: You would rather go back?

O'Connor: Yeah, the thing is, instead of the children going to one parent or another parent, the *parent* needs help. You know, none of it is intended; that is the terrible, terrible sadness of it all. It's just wasted lives, you know?

SPIN: Do you wish now you could talk to your mother? Do you wish she was sitting here right now?

O'Connor: No, because she and all the rest of us are better off with her being dead, to tell you the truth. I have a better relationship with her now that she is dead than I ever had with her when she was alive. I remember talking to her about it before she died and I said, "Why did you hit us? Why did you do that?" And she said, "I never did anything to you." You know, she believed that she hadn't done anything, because it was too shocking for her to deal with. Now, I know for a fact that she used to be really upset after she had done it because my father told me that she'd be devastated. I think that she had—and this is what my father thinks she had—this sort of predisposition to be unhappy. She had all the circumstances in her life by which she could have been happy. Like me. And she just couldn't be happy. She couldn't express herself, she couldn't give love. You know, she must have experienced some kind of abuse when she was a child. She couldn't express love at all. She just couldn't cope. I love my mother. I've always loved my mother. I always understood that she didn't mean to do what she did. I never hated her; I never had any grudge against her. I always understood that she was in a lot of pain and didn't know what she was doing.

SPIN: Do you find your celebrity is a problem in your family?

O'Connor: Absolutely. It's been a huge, huge source of awfulness. Because our family was so fucked up anyway that it was easy to blame the fucked-upness on me and the fact that I was famous and, really, my family couldn't cope with it. And what they really thought, because they saw more of me in the papers than in the flesh, was that I didn't give a shit about anybody except myself.

I just got to the stage where I had a nervous breakdown at the beginning of this year, because I felt that I was sitting behind a wall and I could see out and nobody could see in and nobody could see me, and all around me were people saying to me that I didn't give a shit about anybody. Nobody just talks to you about the fucking weather and the price of eggs. And the rift that it caused me within my family made me want to kill myself. I contemplated killing myself on numerous occasions. Because I just couldn't see that there was any way out. But now it's fine and we worked it out because we love each other and love is the thing that wins. Luckily.

SPIN: Why would people say you only care about yourself?

"I, along with millions and millions of other people, am the victim of a society which aspires to material success in order to fill the emptiness it feels."

O'Connor: Because I escaped. I escaped, that's all. They were still there, and I escaped. I made my dreams come true. My dreams came true, and nobody else's did. And I am a constant reminder to people that they are in pain. And when I talk about these kind of things in public it upsets people. 'Cause everybody likes to brush everything under the carpet.

SPIN: What dreams have not come true?

O'Connor: None. They are all happening.

SPIN: What about men?

O'Connor: I don't dream about a man. I don't

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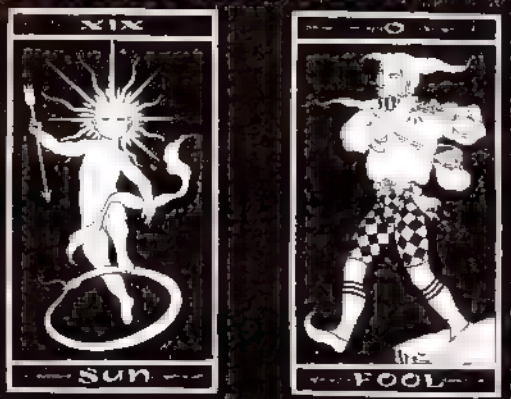

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Sinéad O'Connor

dream about the things I was brought up to dream about. That's all bullshit, too. That's child abuse, too. You are brought up to believe that a woman is not a complete woman unless she has found a man, et cetera, et cetera, and had children. That's bollocks.

SPIN: You don't feel that way? I don't feel I'm complete without a [redacted].

O'Connor: No, I want to be complete by myself. You can be incomplete with a man. What I'm aiming for is to be a complete person. And if that means a man is with me, great, but I'm not complete because he's with me.

SPIN: I understand that, but I mean it's part of the human experience.

O'Connor: Yeah, it is. Of course I want some man to fall madly in love with me and I want to fall madly in love with him, but when it's meant to be it will be and there is nothing I can do about it. In the meantime my dream is to discover myself.

Because I have no hair, people think I'm angry. And because I speak very directly and have one of those faces that sometimes doesn't express what my feelings are or what my words are—I just look angry or pissed off. But I'm not. I'm an Irish woman. I invite anyone in America to go to Ireland and study Irish women. I am your average Irish woman, particularly your average Dublin woman. We're hard women. We're soft women, as well, but we are hard and we don't fuck around. And we curse a lot.

SPIN: Now, what if you met a man and you fell in love with him and he fell in love with you, and he said, "I love you and adore you, but I saw this picture of you with a wig on and you looked great with hair. How about growing it out?"

O'Connor: Then I'd realize he didn't love me at all.

SPIN: No, maybe he really did. It's not a trick question; I'm not trying to trick you.

O'Connor: Oh, no, no. I would just think, well, "You can just fuck off then." I mean, if I want to grow my hair—which, in fact, I do want to grow my hair—that's because I want to grow my hair and not because nobody else likes it.

SPIN: Is the intimidation bit somewhat your creation?

O'Connor: Nope.

SPIN: Are you sure?

O'Connor: Absolutely. It is not a conscious creation. It is because—

SPIN: An unconscious creation?

O'Connor: No! It's because I like to wear certain clothes. It's because I like to wear my hair in a certain way and I feel the same as everybody else. But everyone judges a book by its cover. I've always been abused for what I look like.

SPIN: Isn't that why you cut your hair?

O'Connor: No. I just refuse to allow it to make me become something else.

SPIN: Do you wake up every day feeling like today you are going to have to defend your position in life?

O'Connor: I end up having to do that every day, yeah. In certain situations.

SPIN: Do you want to go to the country for a long weekend and

"Merely the sounds of my mother's feet on the hearth ceiling were enough to send us into spasms of complete terror."

simply not have to deal with what Sinéad O'Connor has to deal with every day?

O'Connor: I deal with whatever God gives me to deal with. And I'm more than happy to do that.

SPIN: You really, sincerely believe that, don't you?

O'Connor: Yeah. I don't believe that God gives a person more than they can handle.

SPIN: Is the fact that you keep your head shaved—obviously a very conscious act—is that even subconsciously partly because you are a victim? Were a victim?

O'Connor: First of all, shaving my head to me was never a conscious thing. I was never making a statement. I just was bored one day and I wanted to shave my head, and that was literally all there was to it. I already had it shaved on the sides and it was about as far as I could go. I think fiddling with the hair is a huge subconscious statement, yeah. Yeah, I suppose it is a subconscious rejection of conformity and of the family and everything that the word "family" can mean. I'm growing it now.

SPIN: Do you have a sense of being

a victim?

O'Connor: Yeah. I, along with millions and millions of other people, am the victim of a society which aspires to material success in order to fill the emptiness it feels. And as a result of that aspiring, causes a huge pain for people and which results in child abuse. And that's what I'm a victim of, yeah. I'm the victim of a society that doesn't believe in self-expression or fighting for the truth.

SPIN: What do you think is the future of rock'n'roll?

O'Connor: That's very difficult. First of all, you cannot separate music from politics because music has always been the voice of the people. Whether you like the sound of it or not, that's what it is. (*Sighs*) God, I think that at the moment the music industry is a microcosm of the world at large. And you can see that in the music industry that its main goals are material and the artists' main goals are material: celebrity, fame, money. That is what they are concerned with, and they drip it in their videos and that is what they say to everybody else. I would like to see that change.

SPIN: Hip hop is doing it, really, more than anybody.

O'Connor: I don't think they do it more than anybody. I think they do it the same amount as heavy metal videos do it.

SPIN: There's more status-symbol consciousness in hip hop.

O'Connor: Yeah, because the black people are the poorest people in America. And they don't want to live in poverty, and they believe that if they achieve material success that is what it is all about and it just isn't true. And it is an abuse for artists to continue perpetuating that belief.

SPIN: Do you think rock'n'roll has a viable future?

O'Connor: It has dilapidated. You turn on any radio station around the world—all you'll hear is crap. You'll never hear a record. You'll hear entertainment and some of it is very good. But you'll never hear any conscious music. You'll never hear anything that inspires you, that makes you think, that spins you off into a fantasy. You'll never hear that. It has dilapidated.

SPIN: One last question: What's the best Irish joke you've ever heard?

O'Connor: Why are Irish jokes so silly?

SPIN: I don't know?

O'Connor: So the English can understand them. ◎

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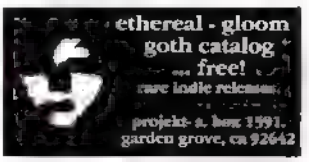

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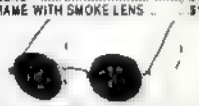

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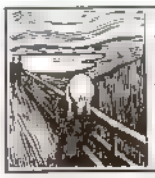

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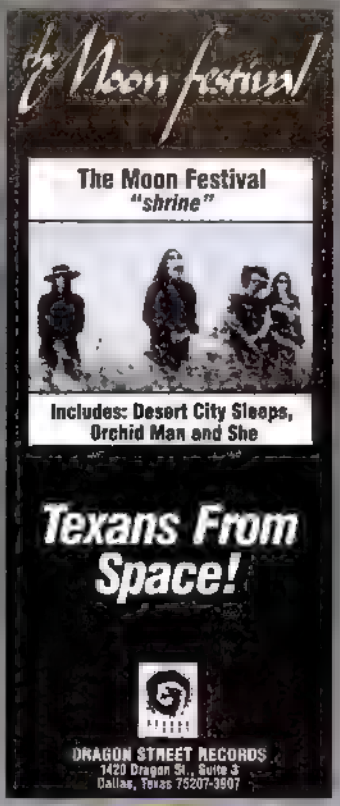

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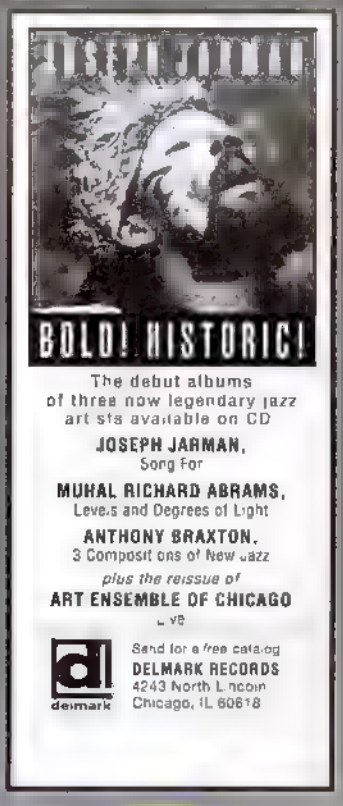

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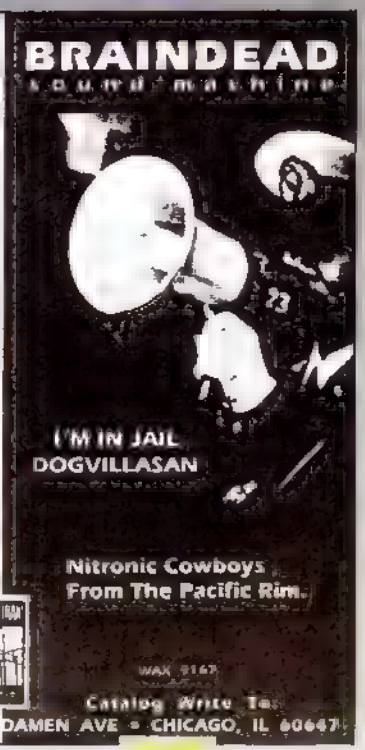

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EPILOGUE

So now what? In this issue of SPIN you've had a look at a riverbed strewn with broken lives. A response of silence is a go-ahead for government arrogance and butchery. You're free to stand at the riverbank and then turn away. Or you can take the plunge, and do something to save people's lives.

If you opt for action, you'll be joining a group that gets results. The world's dictators and the butchers they employ are now going against the tide, thanks in large part to waves of international protest. It used to be the other way around: Governments didn't pay much attention to protests against the torture and killings. But the ranks of protesters have swelled. Their demands for rights protection keep growing louder and louder.

Bruce Springsteen joined up several years ago. He had no intention of keeping quiet about human-rights abuses, so he signed onto Amnesty International's Human Rights Now! world rock tour in 1988. Sting and Peter Gabriel signed on too, along with Tracy Chapman, Youssou N'Dour, and scores of top artists from around the world.

With half the world's population under 25 years old and with high illiteracy rates in many countries, their music opened up minds and hearts on five continents. Audiences joined Amnesty in droves. In Hungary, even the stadium guards joined up.

The human-rights message isn't complicated. It tells you which governments are committing immoral, illegal, intolerable acts. Then it points out what ordinary people and people with extraordinary talents and resources can do to save lives.

Can you get with the program? Do you care that people who peacefully demonstrated for democracy in China are getting tried in secret and sentenced to decades in jail? That black political prisoners in Mauritania are routinely tortured and killed? That security forces in Honduras and police in Turkey are still torturing people, despite pledges by both governments to end such barbarism?

Persecution of Shia Muslims continues in Bahrain. A human-rights disaster is brewing in Ethiopia. Does any of this matter to you?

If so, join Amnesty International. You'll be part of the world's largest human-rights movement. We're nonpartisan and, after 30 years in the human-rights business, pretty damn good at getting prisoners of conscience released, stopping torture, ensuring fair trials for political prisoners, and working to abolish the death penalty.

When you're an Amnesty member, you tune in to hope. Hope for the people dragged into jail and subjected to unspeakable cruelty. Hope for terrified, lonely people. Hope for your world and your own future.

Now it's up to you. You can help make this planet a more perfect place. Or not. You choose.

—Jack Healey

To join Amnesty, write to Amnesty International U.S.A., 322 Eighth Ave., New York, NY 10001, or call 1-800-55-AMNESTY.

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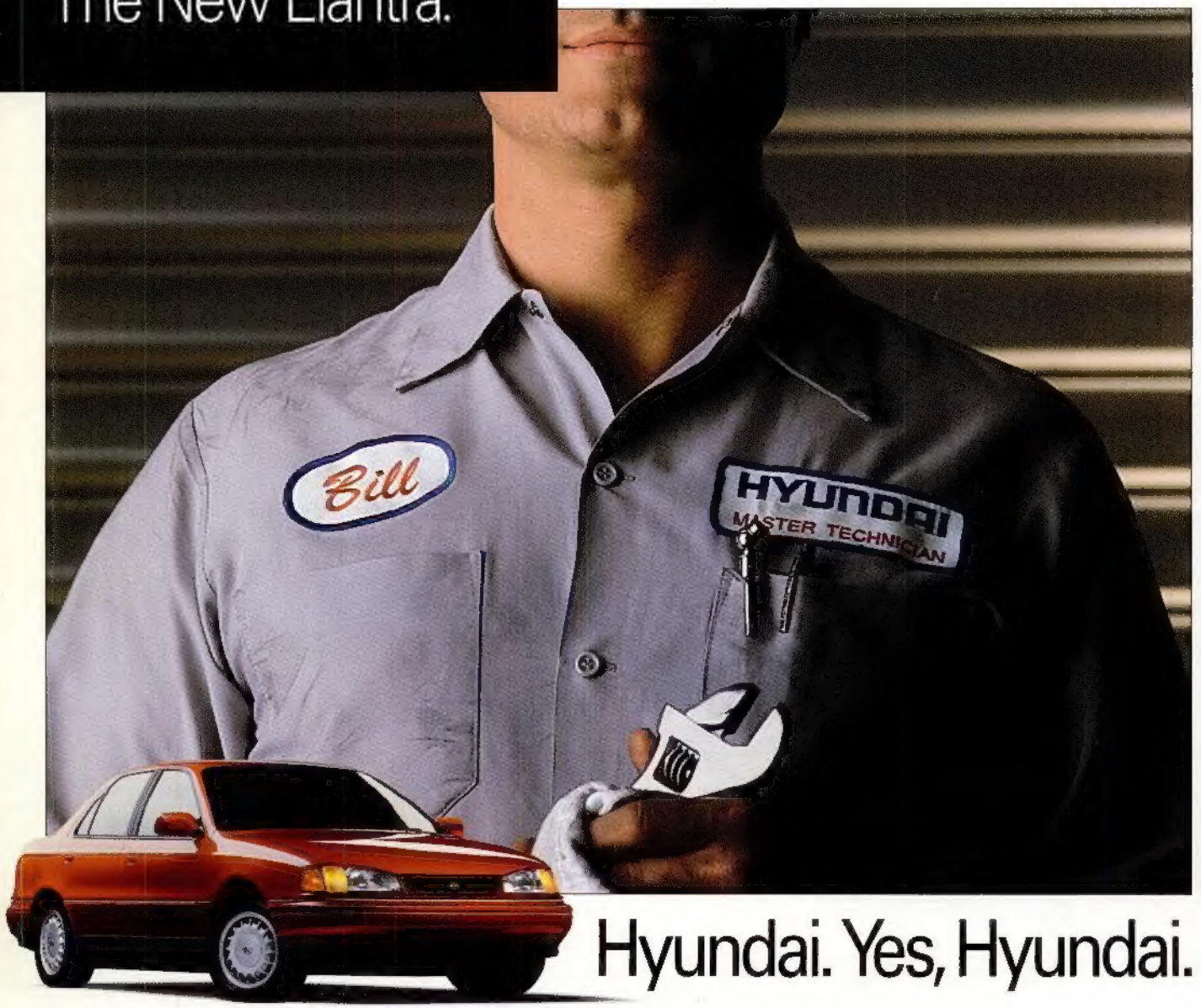

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*Includes all scheduled maintenance for 2 years/24,000 miles. Tires covered by manufacturer's warranty. Excludes items and repairs between servicings or due to accident, abuse or modification. †3-year/36,000 miles; 5-year/60,000 miles. See dealer for limited warranty details. Do buckle up. Don't drink and drive. © 1991 Hyundai.

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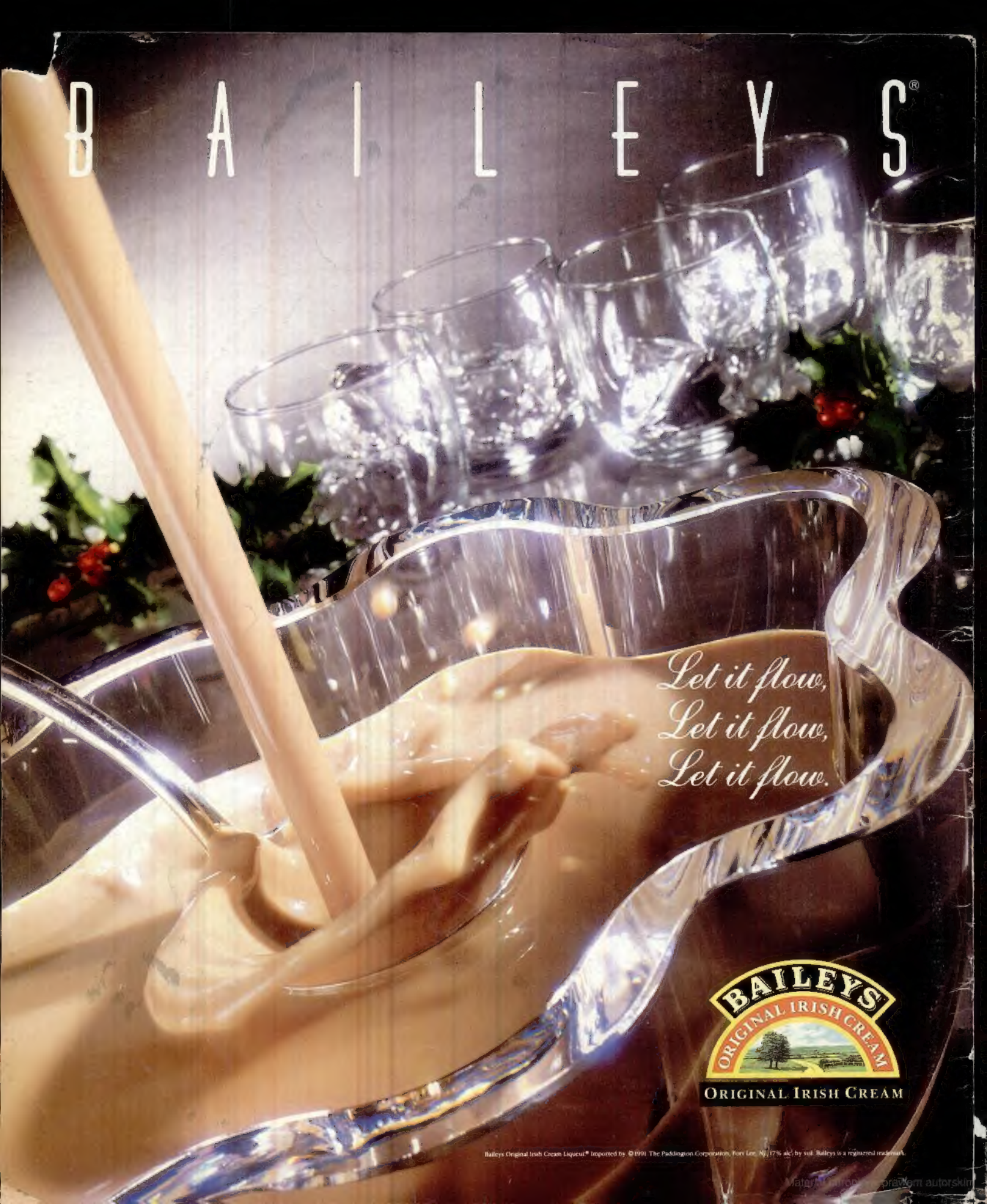
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